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EARLY CHRISTIANITY.

*Second Article.*

THE general Puritan theory of Early Christianity may be reduced to the following propositions:

1st. That it started in the beginning under the same form substantially, both in doctrine and practice, which is now known and honored as Evangelical Protestantism without prelacy. The doctrine was orthodox, as distinguished from all heresies that are at war with the doctrines of the Trinity, human depravity, and the atonement. The principle of the Bible and private judgment lay at the bottom of the whole system. The worship was much in the modern style of Scotland or New England. So was it also with the government or polity of the churches. All was vastly rational and spiritual. Even Presbyterianism, according to the Congregationalists, was not yet born. The Baptists carry the nudity farther still. But all agree, that the church notions of later times were unknown. There was no papacy, no episcopacy, no priesthood, no liturgy, no thought of a supernatural virtue in baptism, no dream of anything like the mystery of the real presence in the awful sacrament of the altar. The primitive piety was quite of another order from all this. It was

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neither hierarchical nor mystical, but ran in the channel rather of popular freedom, democratic right, and common sense.

2d. That this happy state of things, established under the authority of the Apostles and in their time universally prevalent in the churches, was unfortunately of only very short duration. How long it lasted is by no means clear. After the destruction of Jerusalem, we have for a time almost no historical notices whatever that serve to reveal to us the actual condition of the church; and such testimony as we have, with the going out of the first century and the coming in of the second, have so questionable a look at certain points, that it is hard to know how far they are to be trusted anywhere. It became the policy of later times to corrupt and suppress documents. The theory thus is of necessity thrown here on presumption and hypothesis. Two broad facts for it however are settled and given; first, that the church started right in the beginning, and secondly, that on coming fully into view again in the third century it is found to be strangely wrong, fairly on the tide in truth of the prelatical system with its whole sea of corruptions and abominations. Between these dates then must be assumed an apostacy or fall, somewhat like that which turned our first parents out of paradise into the common world. When or how the doleful change took place, in the absence of all reliable historical evidence, can only be made out by conjecture; and here naturally the theory is subject in different hands to some variations. The Presbyterian, Congregational, and Baptist schemes or constructions, are not just the same. All however make the paradisiacal period of the church very short. It is hard to find even one whole century for it after the destruction of Jerusalem; though in a vague loose way it is common to speak of it, as reaching through the second century and some little distance perhaps into the third.

3d. That the change thus early commenced was in truth in full opposition to the original sense and design of Christianity, and involved in principle from the start the grand apostacy that afterwards became complete in the church of Rome, and which is graphically foretold in those passages of the New Testament that speak of antichrist, the mystical Babylon, and the man of sin. The Baptists include in this corruption more than the Congregationalists; and these again include in it more than the Presbyterians, taking Presbytery itself in fact, and that idea of the church which *once* went along with it, for the first stage of the downward progress; but as to what lies beyond this, the vast world of notions and practices namely that go to make up the prelatical system as we find it in full force in the days of Cyp-

rian, the whole Puritan body of course is but of one mind. It is throughout an usurpation only and an abuse, against the Bible, against apostolical and primitive example, against the entire genius and spirit of evangelical religion. It belongs to an order of thought and habit of life, which however countenanced by many good men in the beginning, must be regarded as constitutionally at variance with the first principles of the Gospel, as antichristian and worldly; the natural and only proper end of which, in the course of two or three centuries, was the complete failure of the church in its original form. It became the synagogue of Satan. Christianity went out in dismal eclipse for a thousand years, with only a few tapers, dimly burning here and there in vallies and corners, to keep up some faint remembrance of that glorious day-spring from on high with which it had visited the nations in the beginning.

4th. That the long night of this fearful captivity came to an end finally, through the great mercy of God, by the event of the Reformation; which was brought to pass by the diligent study of the Bible, the original codex of Christianity, under the awakening and guiding influence of the Holy Ghost, and consisted simply in a resuscitation of the life and doctrine of the primitive church, which had been so long buried beneath the corruptions of the great Roman apostacy. The Reformation, in this view, was not properly the historical product and continuation of the life of the church itself, or what was called the church, as it stood before. It was a revolutionary rebellion rather against this as something totally false and wrong, by which it was violently set aside to make room for a new order of things altogether. If it be asked, by what authority Luther and the other reformers undertook to bring in so vast a change, the answer is that they had the authority of the Bible. This and this only, is the religion of Protestants. Popery was antichrist; the Bible teaches plainly a different religion, which must have prevailed in the beginning, and which Popery had contrived to suppress; and what better right than this fact then could the reformers have or need, to fight against it, to overturn it as far as they were able, and to set up the religion of the Bible, the primitive evangelical religion, in its room and place? Such was their warrant, and such as far as it went their good and excellent work. It is not strange however, coming out of such thick darkness as they had in their rear, that they were not themselves able at once to see clearly all that needed to be done in this great restoration; to say nothing of such outward political limitations as they had to contend with for instance in England. Luther

stuck miserably in the mud of Romanism to the last. Even Calvin had his sacramental crotchets, and talks strangely at times of the church. Anglicanism remained out and out semi-papery. Hence the need of new reformation. This we have in Puritanism; which itself also has required some time to come to that perfection of Bible simplicity and truth, which it now happily presents in this country, especially in New England—and most of all, if we take their own word for it, in the wide communion of the Baptists. Here finally, after so long a sleep, the fair image of original Christianity, as it once gladdened the assemblies of the faithful in the days of Ignatius, Polycarp, Irenæus, and the blessed martyrs of Lyons and Vienne, has come forth as it were from the catacombs, to put to shame that frightful mask which has for so many centuries cheated the world in its name and stead. And what is better still, there is some ground now also to hope, since we have got into the middle of the nineteenth century and Anglo-Saxon mind is in a fair way to rule the world, that this second edition and experiment of a pure faith and true church will be more successful than the first; and that Christ will find it proper *now*, in these last days, to be with his church always, and to make good thus his own promise that the gates of hell shall not prevail against it, as they might seem to have done before, till Shiloh come or to the end of the world.

Such in a general view, we say, is the Puritan theory of the past history of the church, and such is the relation in which it imagines Protestantism to stand to Primitive Christianity. The theory and the fancy we believe to be both together absolutely visionary and false. More than that, they are eminently suited to overthrow at last the credit of Protestantism itself, and along with this to upset all faith in Christianity as being really and truly such a revelation as it claims to be for the salvation of the world. Grant the premises of this wild hypothesis, and infidelity may proceed at once to draw its own conclusions with unanswerable force.

It is truly amazing, before looking at the facts of history at all, that the holders of the hypothesis are not troubled some by the very *prodigiousness* of the conceptions that enter into its composition. They appear to be quite easy and at home, for the most part, in the fabric of their peculiar historical system, as though it were the most natural and reasonable structure in the world; and yet never was fabric of this sort probably so put together, as to furnish by its very texture more just cause for anxiety and distrust. The theory, instead of being natural and



reasonable, is as much against nature and reason as can well be conceived. Let any thinking man put out of his mind the mere habit of looking at the past through the medium of the theory itself, so as to bring home to himself clearly in an abstract way the elements and combinations of which it is constructed, and he must feel surely that no scheme could well be, in an *a priori* view, less probable or worthy of trust. Every presumption is against it. If believed at all by the earnestly thoughtful, it can be only through stress of overwhelming evidence, making it a sin to doubt. The unthoughtful of course feel no such difficulty. Their faith is easy, just because it is hollow and blind.

Only look at the scheme in its own light. All previous history looked to the coming of Christ, and prepared the way for it, as the grand central fact of religion and so of the world's life. The Old Testament revelation, through thousands of years, made room for the magnificent and awful mystery. At length it came, the Fact of all facts, full of grace and truth, heralded by angels, surrounded with miracles, binding earth to heaven, and laying the foundations of a new creation of whose splendors and glories there should be no end. Christ died for our sins, and rose again for our justification. His apostles were solemnly commissioned to preach the gospel throughout the world. On the day of Pentecost, they were armed with supernatural power from on high for this purpose; and the history of the Christian Church was opened under a form, that carried in it the largest promise of universal victory and success in following time. With this promise corresponded in full the progress of the new cause, in the age of the apostles and for a short time afterwards. The Gospel was rapidly published throughout the Roman world. The ascended Redeemer at the right hand of God, made head over all things to the church, gave proof of his exaltation and power by causing his kingdom to spread and prevail, in the face of all opposition whether Jewish or Pagan. The whole course of things seemed to show clearly, that the powers of a higher world were at work in the glorious movement, and that it embodied in itself the will and counsel of heaven itself for the full accomplishment of the end towards which it reached. It is usual indeed to make this early success of Christianity one of the external proofs of its divine origin, a real supernatural seal of its truth, like that of miracles. One would naturally suppose, that such a beginning must have led to some sound and true result, in harmony with its own heavenly conditions. But, according to the hypothesis now before us, the very opposite of this took place. Hardly

had the last of the apostles gone to heaven, before signs of apostasy began to show themselves in the bosom of the infant church, threatening to overthrow and defeat entirely its original design. In the midst of its early triumphs, whilst it had still strength to perform miracles and exhibit martyrdoms on all sides in favor of the truth, the leaven of this malignant corruption went forward, strangely enough, in the most active and virulent way ; infecting and poisoning, more and more, the very vitals of the church ; till in the course of a single century from the death of St. John, perhaps indeed much sooner, the entire course of its life was changed from what it had been at first, and turned into a false direction. Traces of the original faith and piety are still to be found indeed in the third and fourth and fifth centuries, the echoes and reminiscences as it were, more and more faint, of the better age which had gone before ; but these were exceptional now to the central tendency, rather than its true and genuine fruit ; the power that prevailed, and that was fast carrying all things its own way, almost without question or protest, was the "mystery of iniquity," that same great anti-christian apostasy in principle and drift, which in due time afterwards culminated in the Pope, and brought upon the world the darkness of the middle ages. The eclipse came not at once in its full strength ; but still, from the very start, it was the beginning of the total obscurity that followed, and looked to this steadily as its end. So in truth Satan in the end fairly prevailed over Christ. The church fell, not partially and transiently only, but universally, in its collective and corporate character, with an apostasy that was to reach through twelve hundred years. Had it not been for some copies of the Bible here and there, in the hands of a few obscure and persecuted witnesses for the truth, the light of Christianity would have become absolutely extinct ; for the so called catholic church, in league plainly with the powers of hell, and with the sovereignty of the world in its hands, showed itself bent for ages on the accomplishment precisely of this terrible result. Never was there so glorious a morning, so suddenly lost and forgotten in thick impenetrable clouds ! The grandeur of the enterprise is equalled only by the greatness of its failure. And what is that fearful whisper that seems to steal upon us, in view of it, from the very depths of the bottomless pit : "This man began to build, and was not able to finish ?" But here again the hypothesis is ready with its own answer. The failure was not final. So long as the Bible lived, there was still room for hope ; and at last accordingly, "in the fulness of time," after centuries upon centuries of ecclesiastical chaos, God was pleased

to say once more, "Let there be light," and there ~~was~~ light. The reformers of the 16th century drew forth from the sacred volume, by the help of God's Spirit, the true scheme and pattern of the christian faith, as it was in the beginning. The spell of ages was broken. Christ gave tokens that he was again at the head of his church. The unfinished work of the first and second centuries was once more actively and vigorously resumed. In the form of Protestantism, it may *now* be expected, after so long a time, to go forward conquering and to conquer, until all enemies are subdued under the Saviour's feet. True, Popery is not still dead, and Protestantism itself is getting into huge difficulties; but we must now have faith in Christ's headship over his church, and in his promise that the gates of hell shall never prevail against it; so as to be firmly persuaded, in spite of all fears and discouragements, that the right course which things have at last taken must certainly prove successful in the end, and that he who sits king in Zion will not rest till he shall have brought forth judgment unto victory.

Will any sober minded man pretend to say, that this, in itself considered, is not a strange and unnatural hypothesis, which it is exceedingly hard to reconcile, either with the divine origin of the church, or with its divine mission, or with the divine presence in it of Him, who is represented as having the government of the world on his shoulders for its defence and salvation?

But the case becomes yet more difficult, when we look into the sacred oracles which lie back of the actual history of the church, and find that instead of lending any countenance to this scheme prospectively, they set before us in the most plain and unquestionable terms an altogether different prospect. Some few passages, we know, have been impressed by a strained and violent exegesis into the service of the theory, by being made in sound at least to foretell a general apostacy of the church, the features of which it has been pretended to identify in the Papal communion; and it is not uncommon to hear the enemies of Popery appealing to these perversions of scripture as the very voice of inspiration itself, and charging those who question the infallibility of their gloss with setting themselves against the authority of God's word. But the day for such arbitrary and unhistorical interpretation, it may be trusted, is now fast coming to an end. On the field of science at least, it is fairly and fully exploded. No real biblical scholar, in any part of the world, is found willing to endorse the vulgar anti-popery sense of these pet texts. On the other hand, however, there are many single passages and texts, which clearly foretell the unfailing stability

of the church, through all ages, on to the end of time. And what perhaps is of still more account, the whole drift and scope of the Bible look always in the same direction, and in this direction only.

Even under the Old Testament, it was a standing article of faith that the theocracy could not fail. But this perpetuity was itself the type only of that higher and better state, in which the Jewish theocracy was to become complete finally as the New Testament church. If it lay in the conception of the old that it should not prove a failure, much more must this be taken to lie in the conception of the new. It is to the times of the Messiah in this view emphatically, that the predictions and promises of the Old Testament in relation to the coming fortunes of the church especially refer. All join in the assurance, that the kingdom then to be set up should be an everlasting kingdom, and that of its dominion and glory there should be no end. Nothing could well be more foreign from the old Messianic scheme, than the imagination that the enlargement of Jacob, by the coming of Shiloh, was to give place almost immediately again to a long night of captivity and bondage, ten times worse than that of Babylon, from which there was to be no escape for more than a thousand years. And just as little can any such view be reconciled with the plan of Christianity, as it meets us in the New Testament. This proceeds everywhere on the assumption, that the kingdom of God, or the church, as now established among men, was destined, not to fall but to stand, not to pass away like the streams of the desert, but to be as the waters of the sanctuary rather, in Ezekiel's vision, an ever deepening and perpetual river. There are, it is true, predictions enough of trials, heresies, apostacies and corruptions; but the idea is never for a moment allowed, that these should prevail in any such universal way as the theory before us pretends. On the contrary, the strongest assurances are given, that this should not be the case.

These stand forth most conspicuously and solemnly, in those wonderful passages from the mouth of the blessed Saviour himself, which form as it were the charter of the church and its heavenly commission to the end of time. "Thou art Peter; and upon this rock I will build my church; and the *gates of hell shall not prevail against it*" Math. xvi. 18. The use which the Romanists make of this text, must not blind us to its true magnificence and grandeur. It is still scripture; and we are bound, as good Protestants, to pause with some reverence before it, and to inquire with seriousness what it actually does

mean. Take it as we may, it looks certainly like a most explicit pledge, in terms of unusual solemnity and deliberation, that the church should endure on its first foundation, that is with true historical succession from its own beginning, through all ages. Of the same tenor again precisely is the apostolic commission, after our Saviour's resurrection and just before his ascension: "All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth: Go ye *therefore*, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost; teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: And, lo, *I am with you alway, even* unto the end of the world" Matth. xxviii: 18-20. Here again we have scripture, under a most majestic and commanding form. Has it any meaning answerable to its magnificent terms, or is it a mere flourish of Oriental figures which mean the next thing to nothing? Words could hardly be put together in a way more significantly suited to express the idea, that the object of this commission was one which could not possibly suffer failure or defeat. The enterprise in view is conditioned by the fact, that all power is in the Saviour's hands, that he is head over all things, as Paul expresses it, to the church; and all conceivable difficulties attending it, as in the case of Moses when sent to bring Israel out of Egypt, are reduced to nothing by the one overwhelming consideration, "Lo, I am with you always," engaging the entire plenitude of this power for its never ending success. It is useless to dwell on other testimonies that look immediately in the same direction. If these capital and classical passages have no power to fix attention or constrain belief, it is not to be imagined that any amount of scriptural evidence besides will be felt to carry with it any real weight.

It is very certain, that only the most wilful and stubborn prejudice can fail to see, how utterly at war the Bible is with the notion of a quickly apostatizing and totally failing church, in any view answerable to the strange Puritan hypothesis which we have now under consideration. No such notion accordingly ever entered the mind of the primitive church itself. It was for a time supposed indeed that the end of the world was near at hand, and that the resurrection state or millenium would soon appear; and it was only gradually, that this view gave place to the idea of a long course of history preparing the way for Christ's second coming. But neither in the one form nor in the other, was the thought ever admitted that the church itself might collapse or go into universal dismal eclipse. That would have been counted downright infidelity. The promise to Peter and

the apostolic commission were never taken but in one sense ; and that appeared to be so plain, that no one but an unbeliever, it was supposed, could ever think of seriously calling it in question. It became accordingly, as we all know, an element of the primitive faith, an article of the early creed, to believe in the being of the holy catholic church as an indestructible fact, a divine mystery that could never fail or pass away.

The biblical doctrine on this subject is so clear indeed, that even the most unhistorical advocates of the Puritan theory are themselves constrained to allow it ; though they take care to put it into a shape to suit their own preconceived scheme. Nothing is more common than to hear them talk of the unfailing and enduring character of the church, of its being founded on a rock, and of Christ's presence with it always for its protection and defence ; they are willing to say with the ancient creed, when necessary, "We believe in the church as one, holy, catholic and apostolical." But by all this they mean in the end, not the church in any outward and visible view, not the historical organization known under this name and claiming these titles from the third century down to the sixteenth, but a supposed succession of hidden and scattered witnesses, in the so called catholic church partly, but more generally after a time on the outside of it, handing down what the theory is pleased to call a pure faith, in conflict with the reigning system, and in the way of more or less direct protest against it as an anti-christian usurpation. It is of the invisible church only, they tell us, the secret "election in Israel," that the glorious things spoken of Zion are to be understood. The church was in the wilderness for a thousand years before the Reformation, among the Waldenses, Albigenses, Henricians, Paulicians, and such like ; God was never altogether without a handful of people somewhere, that refused to bow the knee to Baal. No such evasion however is of any force in truth, for getting clear of the difficulty which we have here in view. It turns in the first place on a mere arbitrary assumption, borrowed from the clouds, and got up palpably to serve a purpose, without the least regard to historical facts and dates ; an assumption that is doomed therefore, by necessary consequence, to dissolve before the light of history more and more into mere fog and mist. These sects of the middle ages are bad stuff at best, for making out the romance of a pure Christianity, from the fifth century to the fifteenth, on the outside of the Roman church. But allowing them to have been as good as the theory before us affects to believe, and granting it besides a fair proportion of sporadic exceptional cases of piety,

in the reigning church itself, to fill up the thin and airy succession, what sound mind can be satisfied still to take *this* for any fitting verification of the glowing predictions of the Old Testament, any true fulfilment of the high sounding promises and pledges that are contained in the New? No *such* construction of these predictions and promises certainly ever entered into the mind of the primitive church itself; the construction is perfectly foreign from the sense of the ancient creed; and we may safely say, that nothing short of the most powerful prejudice in favor of a previously established theory can account in any case, for its being accepted as in the least degree satisfactory or probable. The whole is a subterfuge plainly, got up to escape the clear and proper sense of the Bible, and not an honest commentary by any means designed to meet this sense in a fair and open way.

The difficulty then stands before us still in its full strength. The helplessness of the plea thus put in to turn aside its force, only serves to give it greater weight. The more we bring the case home in an actual way to our thoughts, the more are we likely to be confounded with its palpable monstrosity. Puritanism puts an enormous tax upon our faith from the very outset, when it requires us to believe things so contradictory and mutually destructive as are here brought together in one and the same theory or scheme. That the church should have such a history behind it as that of the Old Testament, such a glorious array of miracles, types, prophecies, heralding and foreshadowing its advent, for thousands of years, as the desire of all nations, the last sense and grand fulfilment of all previous revelations; that its actual inauguration in the world should be so every way worthy of this stupendous world-embracing proem, in the mystery of the incarnation itself, ("God manifest in the flesh, justified in the Spirit, &c." 1 Tim. v: 16.), in "promises exceedingly great and precious," and high guaranties from the throne of heaven, in signs and wonders and miracles, and in wide pentecostal triumphs throughout the Roman empire; that Christianity should start thus, under such divine auspices, the glorified Saviour head over all things for its single cause and sake, and ever present by his Spirit in the midst of it according to his own word, and by infallible tokens also making his presence known and felt on all sides; that the church in these circumstances should look upon itself as an institution founded upon a rock, and make it an article of faith that its charter could not fail: and yet, that in fact all began to fail, to go into confusion, to run towards apostacy, before the end of the second century; that



this fearful tendency, in spite of Christ's headship in heaven and his, *Lo, I am with you always*, on earth, through fires of martyrdom and unheard of sacrifices for the faith once delivered to the saints, so far prevailed actually as in the course of two or three centuries more to turn this whole faith into a lie; that the church in short, under its original corporate character, ran out historically into a complete and universal failure, so as to be for a whole millenium of the most horrible spiritual darkness and desolation, a mere synagogue of Satan, the enemy of all truth and righteousness, seeking only to pull down and destroy what Christ (King in Zion Ps. ii: 1-6) was still trying to build here and there, by such people as the Paulicians and Albigenses: All this taken together, we say, requires such a cormorant credulity for its full reception, that the most careless minds, when brought to think only a little for themselves, are very likely to start back aghast from the scheme, and may well be excused for gently asking, By what authority and right does it pretend so to lord it over our faith?

It would seem reasonable to expect in so improbable a case, that the main positions of the theory at least would be so supported by clear historical proof, as to carry with them some sort of coercive force for such as are willing and anxious to know the truth. An apostacy so profound and total should be properly attested in some way, by historical testimonies and monuments. Allowing it to have come in gradually, this only gives us the more right to expect and demand the evidence of which we now speak. So vast a revolution, in such view, implies of necessity a moral struggle, a conflict of principles and aims, a tumult of inharmonious and opposing forces. To say that the primitive church yielded passively to the great apostacy from the beginning, without contradiction or protest, is to make it from the very first, not "the pillar and ground of the truth," but the mother of error itself; to conceive of it as built, not on a rock beating back the strong floods of hell, but on the mere sand at the mercy of all winds and waves. The least we can ask then, is to have set before us in history some traces of this grand ecclesiastical catastrophe, by which all our *a priori* conceptions of Christianity are so confounded, and our faith in its divine origin and heavenly commission is so terribly tried. And as we should have clear proof in this way of the failure of the church in the beginning, it would seem but reasonable also that we should not be left to take the Reformation on trust subsequently as a merely human work. Allow the continuous stability of the church, as a divine institution carrying in itself down to that time the



promises and gifts with which it was freighted in the beginning, and we may at least try to justify Protestantism as a true product of this historical life itself; in which view it might need no higher warrant perhaps for its vindication. But give up the historical succession, by taking the ground that the church had failed for a thousand years, except among sects from which it is notorious Protestantism did *not* spring, and that the Reformation was in truth a new setting up of Christianity parallel with its first setting up by the Apostles; and then really we see not, why the proper credentials of a truly apostolical commission should be wanting in the second case more than in the first. Luther himself did not hesitate to pose the radicalism of the Anabaptists with this test: "If they have a commission from God, let them prove it by *miracles*." But if the Reformation itself is to be taken for what this Puritan theory makes it, we must say it was quite as much a new church as the enterprise of Storck and Munzer, and needed quite as much the argument of miracles for its support.

But now when we look into the actual course of history, we find it in no agreement whatever with these reasonable presumptions and anticipations, as directed either towards the end of this supposed failure of the church or towards its beginning. The Reformation, we all know, lacked entirely the seal of miracles, the only truly apostolical warrant for a really apostolical work. In this respect it bore no resemblance to the mission of Elijah, the restorer of Moses in the apostate kingdom of Israel. That such an apostacy, reaching through a thousand years, should finally be set right in this way, is not a little strange. On the other hand however, the coming in of the apostacy is more strangely conditioned still. Never was a revolution so vast and important, so broad and deep in its course, so sweepingly disastrous in its effects. We may apply to it without exaggeration the strong figure: "In those days the sun shall be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light, and the stars of heaven shall fall, and the powers that are in heaven shall be shaken." The church, having in charge the most vital interests of a fallen world, proved recreant to her solemn trust, fell from her high estate, and became literally the seat of Antichrist and a synagogue of Satan. Thus fearfully radical, the revolution was at the same time no less dreadfully universal. And yet, strange to say, no one can tell when or how it came to pass. We have indeed certain schemes that pretend to be such an explanation. But these, when examined, are found to be purely fanciful attempts to solve the demands of a theory already adopted, rather

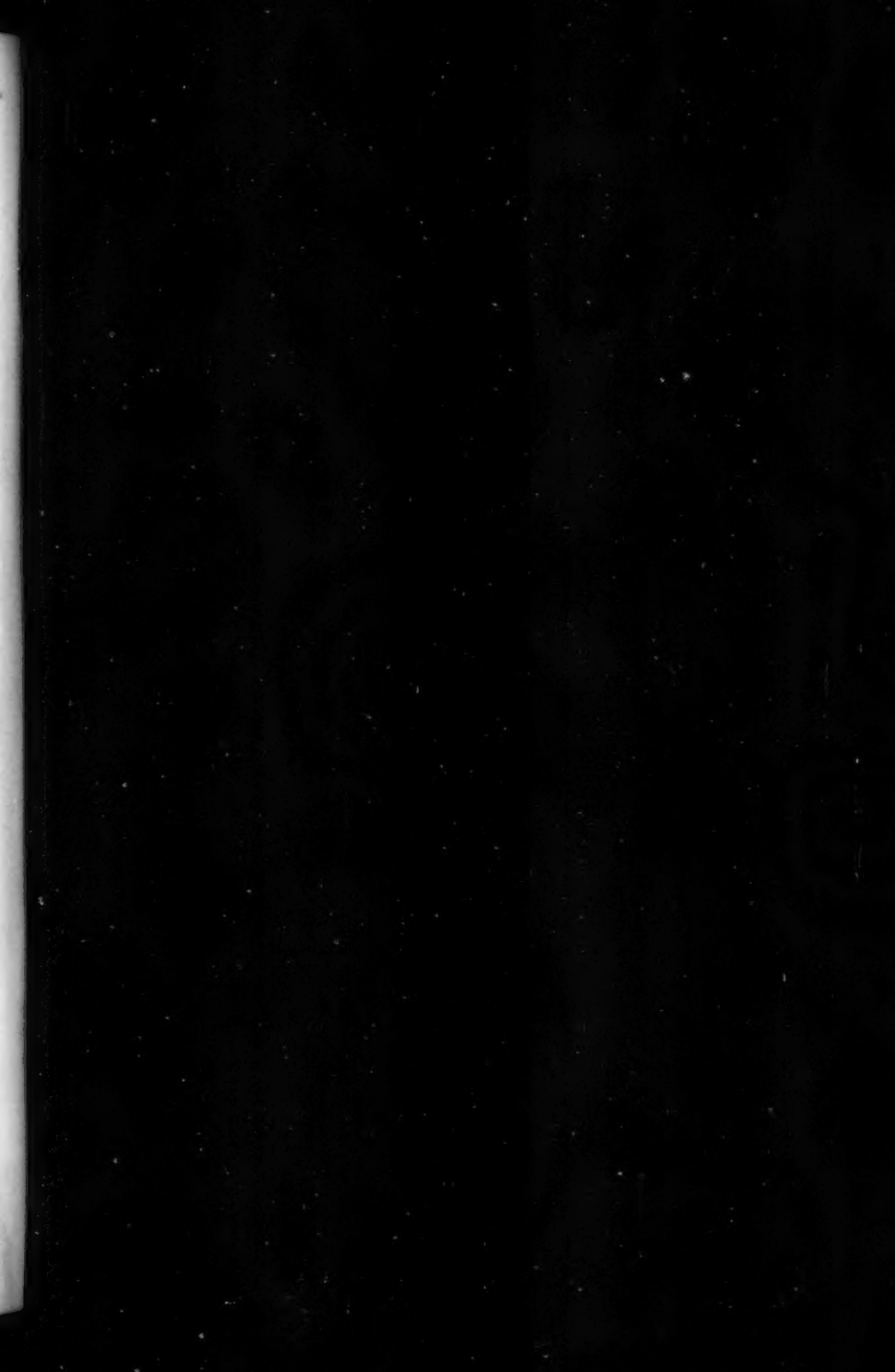
than the exhibition of actual historical grounds for the theory itself. It is assumed in the first place that a certain form of religion, Puritanism for instance, is taught in the New Testament, and therefore that it must have prevailed in the apostolical and primitive church; it is very evident in the next place, that a wholly different form of religion prevailed in the church of the third and fourth centuries, a system intrinsically at war with Puritanism and leading directly towards full Catholicism; here then the fact of an apostasy is supposed to be historically established, and any combination now is taken to be rational and legitimate that serves at all to bind the two sides of it plausibly together. So we have various pretty plans or methods, that of the Quakers, that of the Baptists, that of the Independents, that of the Presbyterians, and coming down somewhat farther that also of the Episcopalians, setting forth with more or less particularity how the corruption of pure Christianity in the first ages took place, first one step and then another, till at last the face of it was totally altered and changed; but if we call for the direct proof of these fine spun contructions, we find it to be either wanting altogether, or at best to consist in a few stray words, picked up here and there without regard to the general formation from which they are taken, and of such slippery and extremely brittle sense, that one may well feel astounded to see what weight they are made to bear. It seems to be counted sufficient for the most part, if no direct proof can be quoted the other way, or if the force of any such quotation can be ingeniously set aside. If Irenæus speak not of infant baptism in terms that cut off all captious debate, the Baptists hold it a good argument that the baptism of infants in his time was unknown. If Justin Martyr teach not diocesan episcopacy in the same terms with Cyprian, the Presbyterians lay hold of him as a good witness that the ambition of prelacy was not yet born. If the primacy of the Roman see be not positively declared by the earliest fathers in round set phrase, the Episcopalians take it as so much testimony that this usurpation, as they call it, came in at a later day. If it appear that the Apostles' Creed is not quoted in its full present form before the fourth century, Puritanism chuckles over the nice discovery, and on the strength of it proceeds at once to deny its apostolical and primitive authority, treating its article of the church as a figment, and seeing in it the germs at least of all sorts of Popish error and delusion. And so it goes throughout the chapter. It never seems to enter the head of these self-complacent theorizers, that the burden of proof lies of right first and foremost upon themselves; that the difficulty of making out

clear and plain testimony in every case for the negative of their arbitrary positions, is not in and of itself any testimony whatever in favor of these positions; that the *indifference* of the argument in this form, the mere want of positive and direct testimony either way, is itself in truth a most powerful presumption, not in favor of their theories, but against them, and in favor only of the cause to which they are variously opposed. The grand difficulty is just to see, how so great an apostacy as is here supposed to have had place, turning the fair bride of the Lamb in so short a time into the similitude of a harlot, should have gone forward through its several stages or steps, as laid down in either of these schemes, and yet have left no trace of its dire revolutionary march on the historic page!

That false tendencies might begin to work in a pure state of the church, is not hard to believe. But the case before us involves immeasurably more than this. These tendencies are taken to be from the start in full opposition to the genius and spirit of the Gospel; they work rapidly in fact towards its overthrow; they bring in by degrees new ideas and practices altogether, the fruit of cunning secular pride and borrowed from Judaism or Paganism, that go directly to undermine and break up the simple evangelical system of earlier times; and yet they provoke no opposition, excite no alarm, but make an easy prey of the whole church, as it would seem, without a protesting cry or a contradictory stroke. The ministers took the lead in the bad movement, and the people fell in passively with their wrong guidance. All sorts of pious lies and forgeries were resorted to for its support; and the daughter of Zion was either too silly to perceive the fraud, or too sleepy to lay it seriously to heart. The old faith died thus, and gave no sign. The apostacy came in without an effort or a struggle. True, as we are told, it had stages and degrees. But each new stage found a generation ready to accept it, as the undoubted sense of the faith they had received from their fathers. The work went silently but surely forward always in the same false direction. It carried along with it the universal church. When this comes fully into view in the fourth century, we find, not a part of it merely, but the entire body fully committed to the sacramental, liturgical, churchly and priestly system, with the full persuasion that the whole of it had come down from the earliest times. All history may be defied, to furnish any parallel to such a revolution, any change political or religious at once so vast and yet so entirely without noise. It passes before us like a scene of magic. As some one has observed, it is as though the world on some one night had

gone to bed Protestant or Puritan, and on waking the next morning found itself thoroughly and universally Catholic.

Only think of a single province, such as modern New England for instance, in the course of one or two hundred years throwing off the whole type of its religion in this way, and with general consent accepting another of diametrically opposite character and cast, without a single monument to inform posterity how the thing was done. Think of her associations and consociations, with their system of parity and rank democracy, passing over in so short a time to a well ordered hierarchy, revolving round a single centre. Think of her free prayers losing themselves in liturgical forms, her naked spiritualism stooping to clothe itself with the mummery of outward ceremonies and rites, crossings, bowings, sprinklings, with all the paraphernalia of a truly pontifical worship. Think of her sacraments turning from barren signs into supernatural mysteries, of the simple memorial of the Lord's supper in particular assuming the character of a real sacrifice for the sins of the living and the dead, and running into the bold and utterly confounding tenet of transubstantiation. Think of her mission of worldly prudence, utility, materialism and common sense, running out into the glorification of monasticism, voluntary poverty, the angelical life of celibates and virgins. Imagine these and other kindred transformations, we say, accomplished between the days of Dr. Increase Mather and those of President Dwight, and all so smoothly and quietly as to leave no trace, not a solitary record or sign of resistance, protestation, division or dissent, to inform posterity in any case when or how the change took place. Would it not be a moral miracle, transcending entirely the common order of history? But in the hypothesis before us, the miracle goes far beyond this. It embraces not one province only, but many, widely separated in space, and differing in every social and national respect. It is universal Christendom, from Britain to Africa, from Spain to India, that is found to have yielded simultaneously to the spirit of defection and revolt, as though it had been animated through all its borders with one and the same principle of evil, bewildering its senses and hurrying it among the tombs. Nothing could better show the universality of the supposed apostacy, and the deep root it had taken previously in the mind and life of the church, than the grand divisions that took place in the fourth and fifth centuries; giving rise to rival communions on a vast scale, some of which have upheld themselves down to the present time. These could not of course consent in any such innovation after they fell asund-





er; on the contrary, the laws of party and sect would have been sure to bring out a loud complaint of the change, if anything of the sort lay within the reach of knowledge before. But the Arians and Donatists brought no charge here against the Catholics. The Nestorians and Monophysites went out and founded new churches, which remain to this day; but they carried along with them the characteristic peculiarities of the Roman system, which they have never ceased since to regard as of truly apostolical force and date. These have indeed become for the most part mere petrifications or dead fossil remains; but in this character they still bear powerful and unanswerable testimony to the fact of which we now speak, the universal and unquestioned authority of this system throughout Christendom in the fourth century. No language written on rocks for this purpose, could be more sure or plain.

The contrast in which this noiseless revolution stands with the known vigilance of the church in other things, serves to make it still more striking and strange. Christianity in the beginning was anything but a passive and inert system, which offered itself like wax to every impression from abroad. It had a most intense life of its own, power to assimilate and reject in the sea of elements with which it was surrounded, the force of self-conservation over against all dissolving agencies, as never any system of thought or life before. It is just this organic and all subduing character that forms the grand argument from history, for its divine origin and heavenly truth. Neander has it continually in view. What subtle speculations were not tried, in the first centuries on the part of the Gnostics, Manicheans, Sabellians, Arians, and others, to corrupt the truth; and yet how promptly and vigorously all these innovations were met and repelled. It was not reflection either that led the way in these contests with heresy, but a fine tact rather and living instinct for the orthodoxy to which they were always opposed. Danger was felt with keen inward sensibility even afar off, and no time was lost in sounding an alarm. There is no lack accordingly of historical witnesses and monuments, to show here what actually took place. They abound in the form of controversies, councils, heretical parties, and wide-spread long enduring schisms. And yet in the midst of all this vigilant activity, if we are to believe our Puritan hypothesis, the great apostacy of Popery came in upon the universal church so quietly that no one now can lay his hand on the origin of a single one of all its manifold forms of corruption and abuse. It gave rise to no controversy, created no party, led to no schism. *The Argu-*

eyed jealousy of the heretical sects themselves was blinded and deceived. They saw not the wholesale treason which was going forward in such bold and impudent style ; and it was allowed by all of them accordingly to pass, without one syllable of remonstrance or rebuke.

But this is not all. The prodigiousness of the theory goes still farther. It is by the Bible it pretends to be sure that the church started on the Puritan model, and that this later state of it therefore must be counted a grand falling away from its first and only true form. But now the Bible itself comes down to us through the hands of this same apostate church, which made no conscience, we are sometimes told, of forging and falsifying documents, to almost any extent, for the purpose of carrying out its own wrong ; and we have absolutely to take it on trust from the credit solely of this suspicious source. This is particularly clear, in the case of the New Testament, the main authority of course for the question here in debate. What authority was it that fixed the sacred canon, determining in the beginning what books were to be taken as inspired, and what other books not a few were to be rejected as apocryphal or false ? The authority precisely of that very organization, which these same canonical writings are now brought forward to convict of palpable wholesale unfaithfulness to its own trust ; and which was in the full career of such sad apostacy indeed, while diligently and as it would seem most faithfully fulfilling this great commission, for the use of the world in later ages. The work of settling the canon began in the second century, but was not fully completed before the fourth ; and then it was by the tradition and authority of the church simply that the work, regarded through all this time as one and the same, was brought thus to its final consummation. We have already seen however, where the church stood in the fourth century, and in what direction all its forces were tending in the third. Is it not strange, that we should be under obligation to such a growing mystery of iniquity for so excellent and holy a gift, and that coming to us in this way we can still be so sure that every line of it is inspired, so as to make it the only rule of our faith ? Is it not strange that the very Church, which had still divine tact enough for the delicate function of settling the canon, had at the same time no power to see or feel her own glaring departures from the light of this infallible rule, but actually gloried in it as the oracle and voucher of her claims ;—not dreaming how, after the lapse of twelve hundred years, it should blaze forth into quite another signification, and be a swift witness against herself, as the whore of Babylon, the mother of abominations and lies.



Nor does the wonder stop here. The faithful execution of this most responsible task of settling the canon, and handing down an uncorrupted Bible, for the use of all following time, is not the only merit of the ancient church. These ages of apostacy, as they are here considered, were at the same time, by general acknowledgment, ages of extraordinary faith and power. Miracles abounded. Charity had no limits. Zeal stopped at no sacrifices, however hard or great. The blood of martyrs flowed in torrents. The heroism of confessors braved every danger. Bishops ruled at the peril of their lives. In the catalogue of Roman popes, no less than thirty before the time of Constantine, that is, the whole list that far with only two or three exceptions, wear the crown of martyrdom. Nor was this zeal outward only, the fanaticism of a name or a sect. Along with it burned, as we have seen before, a glowing interest in the truth, an inextinguishable ardor in maintaining the faith once delivered to the saints. Heresies quailed from its presence. Schisms withered under its blasting rebuke. Thus, in the midst of all opposition, it went forward from strength to strength, till in the beginning of the fourth century finally we behold it fairly seated on the throne of the Cesars. And this outward victory, as Neander will tell us, was but a faint symbol of the far more important revolution it had already accomplished in the empire of human thought, the interior world of the spirit. Here was brought to pass, in the same time, a true creation from the bosom of chaos, such as the world had never seen before, over which the morning stars sang together and the sons of God shouted for joy. In foundation and principle at least, old things, whether of philosophy, or of art, or of morality and social life, were passed away, and, lo, all things had become new. This is the grand argument for Christianity from its *miraculous success*; of which Puritanism, when it suits, is ready to make as loud use as any part of the church besides, as though it really believed this ancient glory to be in some way after all truly and properly its own. And yet by the same Puritanism we are told again, when another object is in view, that the cause which thus conquered the world by manifest supernatural power, was itself so deserted and abandoned by its glorified King, as to be all the while rushing at the same time towards universal apostacy and ruin, by the mystery of sin which it carried in its own womb!

And then again, when this mystery came fully out, and the apostacy stood completely revealed in the form of full grown and undisguised Popery, followed as we all know by the long deep night of the middle ages, there was still no end to the mor-

al wonders of which we now speak. The Papacy itself is a wonder of wonders. There is nothing like it in all history besides. So all will feel, who stop to *think* about it in more than a fool's way. History too, even in Protestant hands, is coming more and more to do justice to the vast and mighty merits of the system in past times, bringing in light upon it, and scaring away the owls and bats that have so long been accustomed to hoot and flit here at their own will. These ages of darkness as they are called, were still, to an extent now hard to understand, ages also of faith. The church still had, as in earlier days, her miracles, her martyrdoms, her missionary zeal, her holy bishops and saints, her works of charity and love, her care for sound doctrine, her sense of a heavenly commission, and her more than human power to convert and subdue nations. True, the world was dark, very dark and very wild; and its corruptions were powerfully felt at times in her own bosom; but no one but a simpleton or a knave will pretend to make this barbarism *her* work, or to lay it as a crime to *her* charge. She was the rock that beat back its proud waves. She was the power of order and law, the fountain of a new civilization, in the midst of its tumultuating chaos. Take the conversion of Saxon England in the time of Gregory the Great, and the long work of moral organization with which it was followed in succeeding centuries. Look at the missionaries that proceeded from this island, apostolical bishops and holy monks, in the seventh and eighth centuries, planting churches successfully in the countries of the Rhine. Consider the entire evangelization of the new barbarous Europe. Is it not a work fairly parallel, to say the least, with the conquest of the old Roman empire in the first ages? Is not the argument of "miraculous success" quite as strong here as there? Think again of the theology of this old Catholic church, of its body of ethics, of its canon law. The cathedral of Cologne is no such work as this last; the dome of St. Peter is less sublimely grand than the first. How wonderful, that the theological determinations of the fifth and sixth centuries, in the midst of endless agitation and strife, should fall so steadily the right way; and also that these true conclusions should seem to hang so constantly, in the last instance, on the mind and voice of Rome. And then in the ages that followed, how wonderful again, that when there was but small power to build, nothing should be done at least to unsettle and pull down the edifice of sound doctrine as it stood before. However much of rubbish the Reformation found occasion to remove, it was still compelled to do homage to the main body of the Roman theolo-

gy as orthodox and right ; and to this day Protestantism has no valid mission in the world, any farther than it is willing to build on this old foundation. Its distinctive doctrines are of no force, except in organic union with the grand scheme of truth, which is exhibited in the ancient creeds and in the decisions of the first general councils. Cut off from this root, taken out from the stream of this only sure and safe tradition, even the authority of the Bible becomes uncertain, and the article of justification by faith itself is turned into a perilous lie. In every view, we may say, the work and mission of the church after the fourth century continue to be, as they were before, the most wonderful and solemn fact in the world. And yet, according to the theory now in hand, it was no longer an apostatizing church merely, but a body fully apostate, fallen from the truth, opposed to righteousness, in league with Satan, and systematically bent on destroying all that Christ came into the world to build. Antichrist, the man of sin, reigned terribly supreme, "sitting in the temple of God, and opposing and exalting himself above all that is called God or that is worshipped." How truly confounding the incongruous combination ! How perfectly self-satirical the incoherent face of the contradiction !

The theory is false. It rests on no historical bottom. The scriptures are against it. All sound religious feeling is at war with it. Facts of every sort conspire to prove it untrue. It is a sheer hypothesis, a sort of Protestant myth we may call it, got up to serve a purpose, and hardened by time and tradition now into the form of a sacred prejudice ; or rather it is an arbitrary construction, that seeks to turn into mere myth and fable the true history of the church. In this view we have said, that it may fairly challenge comparison with the famous critical systems of such men as Strauss and Baur. Indeed these are in some respects more plausible. They take the ground, that Christianity as we have it now in the New Testament is a product properly of the second century, rather than the true birth historically of the first ; that the original facts and doctrines were far more simple ; that the religious imagination of the infant church, or the spirit of controversy among its Jewish and Gentile parties, idealized all into new shape and form ; and that most of our canonical books were then forged according to this new and higher scheme, and piously fathered upon the apostles to give them more credit and weight. Monstrous as this representation is, it is truly wonderful what a show of learning, critical and historical, can be urged in its favor, enough almost to deceive at times the very elect themselves. And yet it is a wild theory,

which needs no other force to upset it in the end than the simple persuasion, that the church itself is of divine origin, and not the most abominable imposture that ever has appeared in the world. The article: "I believe in the holy catholic church," which must ever precede in the order of faith, as Augustine tells us, that other article: "I believe in the holy inspired bible," wherever it really prevails in the heart, scatters to the wind all imaginable sophistries and subtleties in this form. The logic of Hegel before it, becomes no better than a spider's web. The true answer to Strauss, as well as to the whole Tübingen school, is an act of faith in the mystery of Christianity itself, as we have this concretely set forth in the ancient creed. But now what better after all, as tried by the touchstone of such faith, is the Puritan theory at which we are now looking? Is it not equally borrowed from the clouds, and at the same time equally fatal to all firm and full confidence in the supernatural origin and mission of the church, whose history it pretends to follow in so strange a way? To allow the suppositions of Strauss or of Baur, is from the very outset to drag down Christianity from the skies, and to make its whole signification not only human merely and earthly, but grossly carnal also and devilish. It is morally impossible to conceive of its rise and growth in any such style, and yet look upon it as a direct revelation in any way from heaven. The two conceptions are incompatible, and go at once to destroy each other. And just so also, we say, to allow the historical suppositions of Puritanism, is to convert the divine origin of the church into a fiction or a dream. Even such a scheme of history as we have in Mosheim for instance, or in the text book of Gieseler with all its show of authorities, is intrinsically at war with any real faith in this mystery, and can never fail to undermine it where no antidote is in the way. The sense of authorities, the force even of facts, turns always on the standpoint from which they are viewed. An infidel hypothesis necessarily sees all persons and things in the light of its own evil and false eye. Both Mosheim and Gieseler in this way are very little better than Gibbon. To accept their disposition and combination of facts, is of necessity to give up secretly the whole idea, that the glorious things spoken of Zion in the beginning ever had any truth. But the common Puritan scheme goes farther still in this infidel direction. It outrages all moral verisimilitude, and joins together such contraries as by no possibility can cohere in the same real and firm belief. What sane mind can bring its theory of the wholesale errors and corruptions of the early church, into any sort of harmony with the

assured feeling, that the heavenly and supernatural conditions of its presence in the world were ever in any real sense what they are described as being, either in the New Testament or in the ancient creeds? There is not the least doubt, but that the theory in fact tends directly to destroy all such assurance, by the monstrous and violent incompatibility of its own terms. This does not imply indeed a formal giving up of the point in question, as an article of so called faith. That is the true logical end of the contradiction. But all men have not logic; and it is quite possible to carry out the rationalism in another form. The article may be shorn of all historical connections, and thrust out from the real world altogether, so that the supernatural in the case shall have no actual being whatever in the bosom of the natural, but be only as a cloud or dream floating over it and beyond it in Gnostic or Nestorian style. In such shape it may be possible still, to believe in a holy catholic church, which was from the very start the mere foot-ball of Satan. But in the same way it is possible also to believe, that the moon is made of green cheese.

And so we come finally to the conclusion, towards which this discussion has been looking and reaching all along, that there never was in truth any such identity as Puritanism dreams between the early church and its own modern self. Its hypothesis of the vast and terrible revolution by which all is taken to have fallen so soon into another type, is unnatural, unhistorical, irreligious, and fairly incredible; and we have a right to infer accordingly that its primary premise is false. No such primeval state ever existed, as makes it necessary to consider the whole subsequent history of the church an apostacy only and a grand universal lie. Dr. Bacon and others are entirely mistaken, when they imagine any counterpart to New England Congregationalism in the days of Ignatius and Polycarp, or please themselves with the thought that the martyrs of Lyons and Vienne, in the second century, suffered for just such views of truth as are now preached in the pulpits of Connecticut and Massachusetts. An overwhelming presumption of the contrary lies before us in the later history of the church; and it needs only some proper freedom from prejudice, we will now add, to find this presumption abundantly confirmed by the historical data of this older period itself. True, these are comparatively sparse, and often a good deal indefinite and vague; and it is not impossible for an adroit criticism, on this account, to twist them to its own mind—especially if it have *carte blanche* to treat as interpolation or corruption every passage that may prove refractory in the

process. But the violence of all such criticism appears plainly enough on its own front, and when it has made the most of its cause in this way, the proofs that stand in clear force against it are still amply sufficient for the purpose now affirmed. The force of the argument is sometimes enfeebled and obscured, by fixing attention too exclusively on single points and particular phrases and texts. But what the case requires, is a steady regard to the broad issue in question as a whole, and a fair estimate of the testimony or evidence concerned under the like universal view. It is not necessary to stickle for this or that point separately considered; nor is it worth while to waste either ink or breath, in settling the credit or fixing the sense of one clause here and another there, in the remains of Clemens Romanus, Ignatius, or Irenæus. The main question in controversy is of far wider scope and range than any such particular eddies raised in its bosom, and is capable of being brought to some general conclusion in a much more comprehensive and summary way. It regards not so much mere prelacy, or the use of a liturgy in this or that particular form, or the positive practice of infant baptism at a given time, or the mode in which the water was applied in this sacrament whether in the case of infants or adults, or the acknowledgment of transubstantiation and the sacrifice of the mass—it regards not so much any one or all of these and such like points separately taken, we say, as it does rather the whole idea and scheme of the church, in which all such points are comprehended, and from which they derive necessarily in the end their proper significance and import. The determination of these single points, we know, is of no small consequence, where it can be fairly reached, for the settlement also of this general and main question. But what we wish to say is, that in the case before us the main question is not thrown absolutely or conclusively on any particular issues of this sort, which it may be possible for a small criticism to envelope here and there in dust or smoke. The general spirit and form of early Christianity are capable of being understood from its few historical remains, especially when taken in connection with the tradition of following times, in such manner as fairly to overwhelm the nibbling of such mouse-like criticism at particular points, instead of being dependent upon it at all in any way for their own authority. The sense of the whole here is so clear and plain, that we have the best right to use it as a key or guide for the interpretation of the parts. Take for instance the Baptistical points of immersion and the exclusion of infants from the church; all turns finally on the light in which the sacrament of baptism

itself was regarded, and so on the view taken of the supernatural constitution of Christianity; and it requires nothing more than the most general acquaintance with the first age of the church, and the writings that have come down to us from that time, to see and feel surely that the whole standpoint of Christianity then was completely different from that of the Baptists in the present day; so that no proof they may ever seem to have for their favorite hobbies can have any force at all to identify the one position with the other. Allowing the points of correspondence they claim to be real, to what can it amount still so long as it is plain, that the whole inward posture of the early church was in contradiction to the unmystical, unsacramental and unchurchly system, in which the Baptists now glory as pre eminently their own? The best and most sufficient defence against this system after all, is simply to be somewhat imbued with the general soul of the primitive church, as it looks forth upon us from the writings of Ignatius, Justin Martyr, Irenæus and Tertullian. With any such preparation, no one can be in danger of mistaking the modern fiction for the ancient truth. They belong to different worlds; and only to be at home in the one, is necessarily to feel the other in the same measure foreign and strange.

It is in this general way that we propose now, to try briefly the whole question here offered for our consideration. May the Puritan system as a whole, whether carried out in the Baptistic or in the Congregational or in the Presbyterian form, or allowed even to get as far as low-church Episcopalianism, be regarded as constitutionally one and the same with what Christianity was in the second century, and so by implication in the latter part also of the first? To settle this question, we need not go minutely into the Ignatian controversy, or any other of like accidental and mechanical character. Strike out as an interpolation every passage in Ignatius that goes directly for episcopacy, and for the argument now in hand but little is lost from the weight that truly and properly belongs to him as a witness. For a really thoughtful mind, this weight lies in no such texts nakedly taken, but in the reigning drift and complexion of the epistles as a whole. A very short writing in this way, such for instance as Pliny's celebrated letter to Trajan, where there is any power whatever to reproduce in the mind its historical surroundings, may convey by its total representation far more than any criticism can reach by mere verbal dissection. In this way it is very easy, we think, to bring the question here propounded to a full and conclusive settlement. Whatever Christianity may have



been in the second century, and in the age immediately following that of the Apostles, it was not the system that is now known and honored as Puritanism, and least of all was it this system under its most approved and complete form as it reigns at the present time in New England.

I. In the first place, it rested throughout on a wholly different conception of the *Church*. With Puritanism, the church is acknowledged to be divine, as having been founded originally by Christ, and as standing still in some way under the superintendence of his Spirit. But this supernatural character, in the end, resolves itself very much into an unhistorical abstraction. The church is not conceived of as a real outward as well as inward constitution, having in such view of its own organism as a single whole, and keeping up a true identity with itself in space and time. It is of the nature rather of a school; the divinity of it falls back entirely upon its doctrine; or rather on the Bible which is taken to contain this doctrine, while men are left to draw it from this source, as they best can, in a perfectly human way. The only realization of the church after all in the world, thus, is in the form of an invisible communion, representing all those who are happy enough, under the guidance of the Holy Ghost, to find the truth. In the way of such inward spiritual experience, on the part of individuals, there is room to speak still of supernatural operations reaching over into the sphere of our present life; but to dream of any other supernaturalism in the church than this, is counted dangerous superstition. The idea of the church in this way is stripped of all mystery; it falls to the level of any other social or political institution; to believe in it is just as easy, as to believe in the Copernican system or the Parliament of Great Britain. It is neither catholic nor apostolical, except as Aristotle's philosophy may be called Aristotelian for all who are satisfied that he was the author of it. No divine obligation, no supernatural necessity, accordingly, is felt to go along with any actual organization bearing this name; a thousand organizations, wholly independent of one another, may have equal right to such distinction; and though all should fail even for centuries, it would be perfectly possible to restore the machinery again in full force, at any time, and with all its original powers, by the help simply of the Bible, the true *magna charta* of man's rights and privileges in this form. The divine character of the church is in no sense parallel, for Puritanism, with the divine character of the bible. It holds it for a sort of profanity to make any such account of its heavenly authority. Theoretically and practically, Puritanism treats the actual



church as a simply human institution, the work of man's hands, and of divine force at the last only as civil government is of such force, or in the sense rather of the republican maxim, "The voice of the people is the voice of God." The powers of the organization, and so of course the offices by which they are to be executed, are held to come, not from above, but from below. It is made the glory of Christianity to be purely and intensely democratic. No *jure divino* constitution is to be allowed to the ministry, no superhuman force to its functions. The people are the fountain of right, and the basis of all order and law. Congregationalism completes itself in full Independence. All comes thus to the platform of common sense; all goes by popular judgment and popular vote.

Now it is not the truth or worth of this theory, in itself considered, that we are here required to discuss; we merely affirm, that it is in no sort of harmony with the idea of the church which prevailed in the second century. This might be confidently inferred indeed from the simple fact, acknowledged on all sides, that the ruling features of the later church system come fully into view in the next century, as the only scheme known or thought of throughout the Christian world. To imagine the Puritan ideal, as we have it now exemplified in New England, turning itself over, by complete somerset, in the course of one century, into the pattern of things presented for instance in Cyprian or the Apostolical Constitutions, without so much as a historical whisper to show when or how the prodigious revolution was brought to pass, is much like pretending to take Gulliver's travels or the stories of Sinbad the Sailor for sober truth. But besides this, the authorities of the second century itself are full against the whole fancy which is here in question. The drift and spirit of every writing that has come down to us from this time, look quite a different way. To read Ignatius, or Polycarp, or Justin Martyr, or Irenæus, or Tertullian, is to feel ourselves surrounded in the very act with a churchly element, a sense of the mystical and supernatural, which falls in easily enough with the later faith of the primitive church, but not at all with the keen clear air of modern Puritanism, as this sweeps either the heaths of Scotland or the bleak hills of New England. We need not stop here to settle the precise polity of the church at every point, in the age after the Apostles. It is enough to know, that all proceeded on a view of its supernatural rights and powers, which was exactly the reverse of what we have found to be the Puritan scheme. The church was considered a mystery, an object of faith, a supernatural fact in the world, not

based at all on the will of men, but on the commission of Christ, the force of which it was held extended from the Apostles forward through all time. It was taken to rest on the ministry, which was regarded accordingly as having its origin and authority, not from the people, but from God. The idea of a democratic or simply popular constitution in the case finds no countenance in the New Testament; this proceeds throughout on the assumption rather that the powers both of doctrine and government, for the church, start from above and not from below; the apostolate is the root of all following ministerial offices and functions. And fully conformable with this, is the theory and the actual order of the church in the period of which we now speak. We may appeal here even to Clement of Rome in the latter part of the first century, who in a memorable passage, (*Ep. I. ad Corinth. c. 42-44.*) urges the duty of submission to church rulers, on the ground of a divine order in their office, parallel with that of the Levitical priesthood under the Old Testament, of which God had shown himself so jealous through the ministry of his servant Moses.<sup>1</sup> To quote Ignatius on the same general point, may be taken as perfectly superfluous. It is not merely where he bears direct witness for episcopacy, that his testimony is of weight; the force of it lies rather in the universal tone of his several epistles. It is sometimes said, that the episcopal passages have the air of being interpolations, thrust into the text from a later age. But any one may readily see the contrary, who will take the trouble of reading the text with his own eyes, for the purpose of getting out of it its own sense instead of putting into it a sense to suit himself. Their is nothing whatever in these passages at variance with the reigning tone of the epistles, but on the contrary they are in full keeping with this throughout.<sup>2</sup> There is hardly a sentence or a line indeed

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<sup>1</sup> "The apostles had their office from Christ," he tells us, "Christ from God; they were sent by him as he was sent by God. Both in right order according to God's will." Clothed with full power after his resurrection, they went forth and founded churches on all sides, appointing tried men to preside over them as bishops and deacons, which was only fulfilling the sense of ancient prophecy, *Is. lx: 17*. This they did, in virtue of their own commission, to prevent contentions such as they knew were likely to arise; and not only did they appoint these first officers, but "they made arrangement also for the future, that when these should die other approved men should succeed to their place."

<sup>2</sup> This is well shown by that most profound and acute critic, Dr. *Richard Rothe*, in his work entitled "*Die Anfänge der christlichen Kirche*," where the authority of these epistles, and the whole subject of the constitution of the early church, are handled in a truly masterly style.

in Ignatius, that is not in spirit fully opposite to Puritanism, on the great question of the church. He has in his mind always the mystical order of the creed, according to which the fact of the incarnation underlies in a real way the fact of the church, as the carrying out of the same wonder for faith. In correspondence with the real union of divinity and humanity in Christ, his mystical body must have a real historical and visible being in the world as well as an invisible spiritual character, and this must of necessity carry along with it in such view the attributes of unity and catholicity, as the signature of its superhuman authority. Hence the stress laid on the hierarchy, as the bond, not from below but from above, of that glorious *sacramentum unitatis* on which was felt to hang the virtue and value of all grace in the church besides. Hence the holy martyr's horror of all schism. Obedience to the church is, in his view, obedience to Christ; to be out of communion with the bishop, in rupture with the one altar he guards and represents, is to have no part at the same time in the kingdom of God.<sup>1</sup> The unity must be somatic, as well as spiritual.<sup>2</sup> To fall away from this bond, is taken to be a falling away to the same extent from the lively sense of the mystery of the incarnation, a species of Gnosticism which turned the flesh of the Son of God into a mere phantom, and so robbed the Gospel of its heavenly power. For those who resolve Christ in this way into a phantom or abstraction, according to Ignatius, make themselves in the end to be without either substance or strength; all true christian strength comes from an apprehension of the whole mystery here in view as something historically and enduringly real. With this agrees again, as all know, the teaching of Irenæus in the latter part of the second century, as it has come down to us particularly in his celebrated work against heretics; and the same views substantially are presented to us also by Tertullian and Clement of Alexandria.

II. The contrary schemes of the church just noticed, involve with a sort of inward logical necessity different and contrary views also of the *ministry*, and of its relations to the body of the people. Puritanism makes the ministers of religion to be much like county or town officers, or sees in them at best only good religious counsellors and teachers, whom the people create

<sup>1</sup> Μη πλανάσθε ἀδελφοί μου ἐν τῇ σχίζοντι ἀκούουσαι βασιλείαν Θεοῦ οὐ κληρονομήσι, Ad Philad. c. 3.

<sup>2</sup> ἵνα ἴδωσις ὃ σωματικὴ τε καὶ πνευματικὴ, Ad Magnes. c. 1, 13.

for their own use and follow as far as to themselves may seem good. It spurns the whole idea of a divinely established hierarchy, drawing its rights and powers from heaven, and forming in its corporate character the bond of unity for the church, the ground of its perpetual stability, and the channel of all communications of grace to it from Him who is its glorified head. Every view of this sort runs counter to the democracy of the system, and does violence to its rationalism and common sense. It has no power constitutionally to believe in any really supernatural order reaching here below the time of the Apostles; and it must have accordingly the same guaranties for freedom precisely, which it is accustomed to ask and lean upon in the case of purely human and civil relations. Hence the vast account it makes of the popular element in all ecclesiastical interests and concerns, its zeal for the parity of the clergy, its deep seated hostility to the idea of the priesthood, as well as to all pontifical allusions or associations, in any connection with the work of the christian ministry.

But now how different from all such thinking, is the light in which the ministry is found to stand in the second century. We need not go into any minute examination of the ecclesiastical polity which then prevailed. The question is not primarily whether there were three orders of clergy, or two, or only one; whether the bishops of Ignatius were diocesan in the modern sense, or simply parochial; but this rather, What relation did the overseership of the church bear to the mass of its members? And this, we say confidently, was neither Congregational *nor* Presbyterian, in the established sense of these distinctions at the present time. Let any one look into the writers already named, especially Ignatius and Irenæus, so as to catch at all their general tone and spirit, and he will feel it to be no better than burlesque, when Dr. Bacon allows himself to transfer to the scene of Smyrna or Lyons, in the second century, the picture he himself gives us of what he takes to be the repristination of the primitive church in this latter city in our own day.<sup>1</sup> The imag-

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<sup>1</sup> "The meeting which I attended was a meeting of the brotherhood for mutual conference and inquiry. It was held in a school-room, and very much resembled a Congregational church meeting in New England. There was, however, one obvious difference. Those brethren were not merely concerned with the working of a system defined and understood in all its details, and familiar to them from their childhood. With the New Testament in their hands, they were inquiring after principles and rules of church order; and the question which then chiefly occupied their attention, and seemed somewhat to divide their opinions, was whether the govern-

ination of any such ecclesiastical republicanism, is completely foreign we may say from the whole spirit of this ancient period. Only look at the way in which Irenæus speaks of the episcopate and the apostolical succession, as the grand bulwark of truth against all heresy and schism; not once or twice merely, but whenever the subject comes in his way; showing the view to be inseparably joined with the entire scheme of Christianity in his mind. It is not to be disguised moreover, that the episcopate is viewed by him as a general corporation, having its centre of unity in the church of Rome. Against the novelty of heretics, he appeals to the clear succession of the catholic sees generally from the time of the Apostles; but then sums all up, by singling out the Roman church, founded by the most glorious apostles Peter and Paul, and having a certain principality for the church at large, as furnishing in its line of bishops a sure tradition of the faith held by the universal body from the beginning.<sup>2</sup> Take this system of church government as we may, it is the very reverse of all such independency and popularity as are made to be the basis of ecclesiastical order in New England. Congregationalism lays no such stress on the episcopate or overseership of the church, regarded as an organic corporation, bound together always by a common centre, and having authority by unbroken tradition from the Apostles. And just as little have we here the

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ment of their church should be in part committed to a body of elders, or remain entire in the hands of the assembled brethren. As I listened to the discussions, I could not but admire the free and manly, yet fraternal spirit in which it was conducted. And as I saw what a school for the development of various intellectual gifts, as well as for the culture of Christian affection, that church had been under its simple democratic organization, I felt quite sure that those brethren, with all their confidence in their teachers, would not be easily persuaded to subvert a system to which they were already so greatly indebted, or to divest themselves of the right of freely debating and voting on all their interests and duties as a church."—"Rarely, have I enjoyed anything more than I enjoyed my visit to that missionary and apostolical church. Nor do I know where to look for a more satisfactory representation of the ideal and primitive Christianity, than in the city which was made illustrious so long ago by the labors of Irenæus, and by the martyrdom of Pothinus and Blandina."—*Letter from Lyons.*

<sup>2</sup> "Sed quoniam valde longum est, in hoc tali volumine omnium ecclesiarum enumerare successiones: maximæ et antiquissimæ et omnibus cognitæ, a gloriosissimis duobus Apostolis Petro et Paulo Romæ fundatæ et constitutæ ecclesiæ, eam quam habet ab Apostolis traditionem et annuntiatam hominibus fidem per successiones episcoporum pervenientem usque ad nos indicantes, confundimus omnes eos, &c —Ad hanc enim ecclesiam propter potiorem principalitatem necesse est omnem convenire ecclesiam, &c."—*Adv. hæres. III. 3. §. 2.*

type of modern Presbyterianism. The bishops of Ignatius, Polycarp, and Irenæus, however small may have been their charges, were not simply Presbyterian pastors. They have altogether a different look, and hold an entirely different relation to the people over whom they preside. Their rule is not indeed lordly, but neither is it simply representative and democratic; it is patriarchal rather, but at the same time an actual episcopate or oversight, derived from the chief Shepherd, at once supreme and self-sacrificing, in the full spirit of 1 Pet. v: 1-4. The order altogether is that of a hierarchy. The pastors are at the same time priests; and pontifical ideas fall in with their ministry easily and naturally from every side. The altar at which they serve is not merely a cold metaphor; and the sacrifice they offer upon it is mystical indeed, but nevertheless awfully and sublimely real. In one word, the system contains in element and germ at least the whole theory of the church that is more fully presented to us afterwards, in the writings of Cyprian and Augustine. There is no contradiction between the two schemes. The first flows over without any sort of violence or effort into the last; and becomes hard to understand, only when inquisitorial theorists put it to the rack, for the purpose of forcing from it a sense and voice which are not its own.<sup>1</sup>

III. This leads us naturally to the consideration of a third general and broadly palpable difference between Puritanism and the early church, that namely which appears in the view they take of the *holy sacraments*. The modern system owns no real mystery either in baptism or the Lord's supper. It takes them indeed for divine institutions; but the sense of them is altogether natural only and human. They carry in them no objective force, have no power whatever to present what they represent; they are taken to be signs only or pictures of a grace, which exists not in the sacraments themselves, but out of them and beyond them under a wholly different form. Any virtue they have is from the activity of the worshipper's mind, moved it may be by the Spirit of God to make good use of the outward and natural help to devotional thoughts and affections, which is thus placed within its reach. All beyond this is held to be superstition; and the sacramental system in particular of the Catholic church, as well as the whole doctrine of the real pres-

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<sup>1</sup> This is shown, with what appears to us to be the most triumphant evidence, by Richard Rothe, in the great work to which we have before referred, *Die Anfänge d. chr. Kirche*, particularly in the third book.

ence in its Protestant form also, is denounced and discarded as a purely diabolical figment, brought in under the Papacy in complete contradiction to the original sense of the Gospel, and without the least ground or reason in the practice of the church as it stood in the beginning.

It might seem plain to any child, that if any such low view had prevailed in the second century, it must have required a miracle to place the entire church, in its doctrine of the sacraments, where we find it to be in the fourth century, or to lead it over even in half a dozen centuries to so astounding a tenet as that of transubstantiation, with like universal and at the same time profoundly noiseless and peaceful revolution. But the second century can easily enough speak here for itself. And so clear and full in truth is its voice on the whole subject, that we venture to say no one can listen to it attentively, having any sort of confidence at the same time in the true apostolicity of its faith, and not be inspired with a feeling of downright horror, in view of the deep yawning gulph by which this is found to be sundered from what we have just now seen to be the modern system. Right or wrong, Puritanism is in its sacramental doctrine a grand apostacy, not only from what Protestantism was designed to be in the beginning, but also from the faith of the early church as it stood in the days of Pothinus and Irenæus. The martyrs of Lyons must have drawn back aghast from the view of baptism and the holy eucharist now commonly prevalent in New England; while their venerable bishops, no doubt, would have placed it in one category with the numerous heresies of the time, that went directly to overthrow the real appearance of Christ in the flesh.

Passing over baptism, let us fix our attention on the sacrament of the blessed eucharist. Nothing can be clearer at first glance, than that the fathers of this period make vastly more of the institution than is at all answerable to the natural and simple light in which it is regarded by Puritanism. They lay great stress on its doctrinal significance, as being in some vital way related to the mystery of the incarnation, and conditioning the whole faith and life of the church; and they seldom refer to it, without bringing into view the idea of its mystical supernatural import. Ignatius takes the real presence of the eucharist to be organically related to the truth and realness of the Saviour's humanity, and upbraids the docetic Gnostics, (who acknowledged thus also the force of the connection,) with abstaining from the institution, because they would not believe that Christ had ever assumed anything more than the show of a human body.

"They refrain from the service," he writes, "on account of their not confessing that the eucharist is the flesh of our Saviour Jesus Christ, which suffered for our sins and which the Father in his goodness raised from the dead. Contradicting the gift of God they die in their contention; but it would be their interest to love, so that they too might rise again."<sup>1</sup> In another place, (ad Ephes. c. 20.) Ignatius calls the eucharist the "medicine of immortality" (φάρμακον ἀθανασίας) and the "antidote of death" (ἀντιδοτὸν τοῦ μὴ ἀποθανεῖν); phrases that are sufficiently explained by the last clause of the foregoing quotation, where the risen flesh of the Saviour is made to be the power that is to reanimate also our mortal bodies. But if there were any doubt as to the doctrine of Ignatius here, or as to its agreement with the reigning faith of the church at the time, it must vanish certainly before the ample and plain testimony of Irenæus.

With this father again, the doctrine of the eucharist is made to be of extraordinary practical and theoretical account. It is not a circumstance merely in the general system of faith, but appears as a truly living and divinely efficacious link, between the mystery of the incarnation on one side and the coming resurrection of our bodies on another; showing plainly that these connections as suggested by Ignatius, were not fanciful or casual, but rooted in the reigning belief of the church. The Gnostics generally held the material world to be intrinsically evil, and so not capable of coming into any real union with the new creation by Christ. They would not allow accordingly that the Saviour took a real human body; and they could not admit of course then the resurrection of the body, in the case of his people. It was a principle with them, that the body as such constitutionally excluded the idea of immortality. Against these errors Irenæus affirms the goodness of the natural creation, the truth of Christ's incarnation, and the commensurateness of his redemption with the whole nature of man, as being able to save the body in the way of future resurrection no less than the soul. One grand source of argument is found in the mystery of the holy supper, which it is taken for granted that these heretics, in common with the church, acknowledged to be a bond of communication with Christ's substantial flesh and blood. However disposed they might be by their spiritualistic system to take these

<sup>1</sup> Εὐχαριστία; καὶ πρὸς τοὺς ἀπεχθόμενοι διὰ τὸ μὴ ὁμολογεῖν, τὴν εὐχαριστίαν σὰρκα εἶναι τοῦ σωτῆρος ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ, τὴν ὑπὲρ ἡμῶν ἡμῶν παθόντα, ὃν τῇ χρηστότητι ὁ πατὴρ ἡγείρεται. Οἱ ἀντιλεγόμενοι τῇ σάρκι τοῦ Θεοῦ ἐσχηματισμένοι ἀποθνήσκουσιν· συνεπὲς δὲ αὐτοῖς θύσαν, ἵνα καὶ ἀθανάσωσι.—Ad Smyrn. c. 7.



terms in an improper and merely figurative sense, it seems that they were still compelled to yield here to the pressure of the catholic faith, and to admit thus an actual presence of the Saviour's glorified body, whatever that might be, in this sublime mystery; and no evidence could well be stronger than this, for the universal and vital authority of this faith in the church itself at the time. To deny the possibility of the resurrection, according to Irenaeus, involves this consequence: "That neither the cup of the eucharist is the communication of his blood, nor the bread which we break the communication of his body; for it is not blood, unless it be from his veins and his flesh, and the rest of that human substance, by which he became truly the Word of God." Again: "Since we are members of him, and live from the natural creation, which he furnishes to us for this end, causing his sun to rise and sending rain according to his own pleasure; he has proclaimed the cup which is of the natural creation to be his own blood, from which he moistens our blood, and has established the bread which is of this creation to be his own body from which he nourishes our bodies." And still farther: "When therefore the natural cup and bread, by receiving the word of God at consecration, are made the eucharist of the blood and body of Christ, by which the substance of our flesh is advanced and upheld, how can they deny that the flesh is capable of the gift of God, which is eternal life, since it is nourished by the blood and body of Christ and is his member? Even as the blessed Apostle says in his Epistle to the Ephesians, *We are members of his body, of his flesh and of his bones*; not speaking of the spiritual and invisible man, (for spirit has neither bones nor flesh.) but of that constitution which is truly human, consisting of flesh and nerves and bones, which is nourished from the cup that is his blood and from the bread that is his body. And as the slip of the vine laid in the ground brings forth fruit in its time, and the grain of wheat falling into the earth and undergoing decomposition rises manifoldly by God's Spirit, through which all things are upheld; which then by the wisdom of God come to be for the use of man, and receiving the word of consecration become the eucharist, which is the body and blood of Christ: so also our bodies nourished by this, and laid away in the earth and dissolved into it shall rise again in their time, the Word of God bestowing the resurrection upon them to the glory of God the Father."<sup>1</sup> In another place, Iren-

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<sup>1</sup> Adv. haeres. v. 2, §. 2, 3.

aeus calls upon the heretics either to give up the errors now noticed, or else to abstain from the eucharist, as some of the earlier Docetae actually did in the time of Ignatius, according to what we have seen before. "How can they say," he exclaims, "that the flesh perishes and attains not to life, which is nourished by the body and blood of the Lord? Let them change their view, or refrain from offering these things. Our view, on the contrary, agrees with the eucharist, and the eucharist again confirms our view. For we offer to him things that are his own, setting forth congruously the communion and unity, and confessing the resurrection of the flesh and spirit. For as the bread from the earth, when it has received the invocation of God, is now no longer bread, but the eucharist consisting of two things, an earthly and a celestial; so also our bodies receiving the eucharist are no longer corruptible, having the hope of the resurrection to everlasting life."<sup>1</sup>

So much for the real presence of the Saviour's glorified humanity in the holy supper. Can there be any doubt in the face of these passages, whether such a mystery was held by the early church, or whether it was considered to be of necessary force as a part of the faith originally delivered to the saints? We see too, how the service was regarded as carrying in it the force of a sacrifice or oblation, analogous with the offerings of the altar under the Old Testament; an idea which Irenaeus elsewhere utters in full and distinct terms, applying to the case, in the spirit of later centuries, the memorable passage, Mal. i: 10, 11, where it is said: "From the rising of the sun even unto the going down of the same, my name shall be great among the Gentiles; and in every place incense shall be offered unto my name, and a pure offering; for my name shall be great among the heathen, saith the Lord of Hosts." But what student of antiquity needs to be told, that the eucharist in this early period carried in it a significance and solemnity, of which no rational account can be given, except on the ground that such powers as those now mentioned were supposed to go along with its celebration?<sup>2</sup>

We inquire not now into the truth of this old sacramental doctrine; neither is it necessary to define in what mode precisely it understood the mystery of the real presence to take place. It is enough to know, that the mystery itself was universally

<sup>1</sup> Adv. haeres. iv. 18. §. 5.

<sup>2</sup> See an interesting and clear representation of the testimony of Irenaeus on the whole subject in *Möhler's Patrologie*, pp. 377-391.

received, as of fundamental consequence in the christian system; and that the doctrine therefore stood in no sort of harmony with the common Puritan view of the present time. The martyrs of Lyons and Vienne died in full hope of the resurrection; but this hope was based on a species of realistic sacramentalism here, which we feel very sure would bring upon them now through all New England the charge of gross superstition, and leave no room for them whatever within the magic ring of its "evangelical sects."

IV. A like wide contrast between the early system and the modern comes into view, in the next place, when we look at their different theories in regard to the *rule of faith*.

It is a primary maxim with Puritanism, that the Bible alone is the rule and ground of all religion, of all that men are required to believe or do in the service of God. In this sacred volume, we are told, God has been pleased to place his word in full, by special inspiration, as a supernatural directory for the use of the world to the end of time; for the very purpose of providing a sufficient authority for faith, that might be independent of all human judgment and will. If it be asked, how the Bible is to be interpreted and made available as a rule of faith, the answer is that every man must interpret it as he best can for his own use, under the guidance of God's Spirit, and with such helps as he may happen to have at his command. In other words, the ultimate tribunal for the exposition of God's word is private judgment. No other tribunal can be regarded as of any legitimate authority or right. All tradition especially, pretending in any way to over-rule private judgment, is to be firmly rejected as something inimical to the rights of reason and conscience. What men can see to be taught in the scriptures is to be of force for them as revelation, and what they cannot see to be so taught there is to be of no such force. The great matter accordingly is to place the bible in every man's hands, and to have him able to read it, that he may then follow it in his own way. The idea seems to be, that the bible was published in the first place as a sort of divine formulary or text book for the world to follow in matters of religion, and that the church rested on no other ground in the beginning for its practices or doctrines, appealing to it and building upon it in a perfectly free and original way after the fashion of our modern sects; in which view it is to be counted still the foundation and pillar of the truth, so that the dissemination of its printed text throughout the world, without note or comment, is the one thing specially needful and specially to be relied upon for the full victory of Christianity, from sea to sea and from the river to the ends of the earth.

This theory has many difficulties. To place a divine text at the mercy of private judgment, looks very much like making it a mere nose of wax. Men deal not thus with the authority of other laws and constitutions. All the world over the sense of written statutes is ruled more or less by the power of an unwritten living tradition, (such as the "common law" of England and this country,) which at the same time is applied to the case by some public tribunal, and *not* by every man at his own pleasure. So deeply seated indeed is this order in our very nature, that it is never surmounted even by those who in the case before us pretend to set it aside. Puritanism never in truth allows the bible *alone* to be the religion of Protestants. Every sect has its tradition, its system of opinions and habits, handed forward by education, just as much as the Catholic church itself, through which as a medium the written word is studied and understood at every point. In no other way could it exist as a historical body at all. The private judgment of a good Presbyterian is always carried, from infancy on to old age, in the bosom of a general Presbyterian stream of thought, that has been flowing in its own separate channel from the origin of this communion in the days of John Knox; and the same thing precisely is true of the Methodists, as well as of all the other scores of sects that in as many variant ways follow the same infallible rule of faith and practice. It cannot well escape observation again, that the bible itself lends no sort of countenance to the hypothesis, which turns it thus in such abstract style into the sum total of all God's mind and will, mechanically laid down for man's use, like the directions for the building of the tabernacle in the book of Exodus. It never speaks of itself as being either a system of divinity or a confession of faith. It has no such form, but shows as clearly as possible an altogether different construction and design. Nay more, it is perfectly certain from the New Testament itself, that Christianity was *not* made to rest on any such foundation in the beginning, but on a living authority, which started in Christ and passed over from him to the ministry of the church. This is as plain as words could well make it, from Matth. xvi: 18, 19; Matth. xxviii: 18, 20; Eph. ii: 19, 22, and 1 Tim. iii: 15, 16. On the basis of the apostolical commission, backed by heavenly miraculous authority, and entering into no negotiation whatever with the world's private judgment, the early church was in fact planted and built throughout the Roman empire. The books of the New Testament came afterwards as part and parcel of the glorious revelation committed to her hands; and it was not till the fourth century, as we have before seen,

that the arduous and responsible task of settling the canon was brought to a complete close, although the main parts of it were acknowledged and in general use probably before the middle of the second.

These are difficulties, we say, which from the Puritan standpoint it is by no means easy to meet. But we do not press them at present. What we wish to hold up to view is the clearly evident fact, that the church of the second century was not Puritan but Catholic, in its conception of the rule of faith, concurring here in its whole habit of thought with the order that actually prevailed, as just now stated, in the first planting of Christianity in the world. The sacred books are indeed referred to with high veneration in this age, as they are in all subsequent times of the Catholic church, but never under any such abstract and independent view, as they are made to carry in the private-judgment sect system of the present day. Of a bible, out of which every man was to fetch the doctrines and practices of religion as he best could with the bucket of his own common sense, these early Christians had not so much as the most remote imagination. They own the inspiration of the scriptures and appeal to them as the norm and measure of their faith; but it is only and always as they are taken to be comprehended in that general tradition of infallible truth, which had come down from the Apostles in a living way by the church. The bible was for them the word of God, not on the outside of the church, and as a book dropped from the skies for all sorts of men to use in their own way, but in the bosom of the church alone, and in organic union with that great system of revelation of which this was acknowledged to be the pillar and ground. Sundered from that organism, cut off from the living stream of catholic tradition, the holy oracles in the hands of heretics were considered as shorn of all their force. Such men as Irenæus and Tertullian had no idea of sitting down, and debating points of doctrine with the Gnostics out of the bible, in any way owning at all their right to appeal to it as an independent rule; just as little as it ever entered into their heads probably to put the people, "with the New Testament in their hands," on inquiring "into the principles and rules of church government," after the democratic fashion of the nineteenth century. They will not allow the heretics to put their cause on any ground of this sort; they cut them off by prescription, that is, by the clear title of the regular church to the succession or tradition of Christianity, as it had been handed down, under the broad seal of its original charter, from the time of the Apostles. Some notice has been taken be-

fore of the way, in which Irenæus appeals to the known apostolical succession of the bishops in his time, and their collective voice in favor of the truth, bringing all to centre and culminate in Rome as the principal see. This constitution, and no other, is with him the organ of unity both in doctrine and government; all else is heresy and schism. "It is necessary to hearken to the presbyters in the church," he tells us (*Adv. haer. iv. c. 20*), who have the succession from the Apostles, and along with the succession of the episcopate have received the certain gift of truth according to the good pleasure of the Father." Again (*iv. c. 33, §. S.*): "The true knowledge (*γνώσις*) is the doctrine of the Apostles, and the ancient constitution (*εὐσεβεία*) of the church in the whole world, and the character of the body of Christ according to the successions of the bishops, to whom they (the Apostles) have committed the church in every place." The paths of heresy are many and variable, but the doctrine of the church is one and unchanging all over the world; "she preserves the traditional faith, though spread throughout the earth, with the greatest care, as if she occupied but one house; and believes it, as if she had but one soul and one heart; and proclaims, teaches, hands it forward, with marvellous agreement, as if she had but one mouth. The languages used are indeed different, but the matter of the tradition is still one and the same" (*i. 10. 2. comp. v. 20. §. 1.*). Again (*iii. 4. §. 1.*): "If the Apostles had left us no writings, ought we not still to follow the rule of that tradition, which they handed over to those to whom they committed the churches? To this rule many nations of barbarians do hold in fact, which believe in Christ, and have his salvation inscribed by the Holy Ghost without ink or paper on their hearts, carefully following the tradition &c." Specially striking is the passage, *L. iii. c. 24. §. 1.*, where this tradition is made to carry in it a divine element, rendering it infallible; gathering itself up into the mystery of that faith "which we have received and hold from our church, and which the Spirit of God continually renovates, like a precious jewel in a good casket, imparting to it the quality of his own perennial youth." Such is the testimony of Irenæus. Tertullian is, if possible, still stronger in the same churchly strain. He will know nothing of any private argumentation, from the scriptures or any other source; all must yield to the smashing weight of ecclesiastical tradition. Christianity is built, not on a book, but on a living system handed down from the day of Pentecost. Truth is fellowship with the churches derived by regular succession from the Apostles; they have collectively but one doctrine; and whatever disowns this

order, is without farther examination to be rejected as false. His whole tract on the *Prescription of Heretics* rests on this view, and might be quoted here with effect. The heretics have no right to appeal to the scriptures. These belong only to the church. She may say to them: 'Who are you? Whence do you come? What business have you strangers with my property? By what right are you, Marcion, felling my trees? By what authority are you, Valentine, turning the course of my streams? Under what pretence are you, Apelles, removing my land-marks? The estate is mine; why do you other persons presume to work it and use it at your pleasure? The estate is mine; I have the ancient, prior possession of it; have the title deeds from the original owners. I am the heir of the Apostles; they made their will, with all proper solemnities, in my favor, while they disinherited and cast you off as strangers and enemies.'" Tertullian had no idea of making exegesis the mother of faith.<sup>1</sup>

Is it necessary to say, that the faith of the second century, as here portrayed, is something very different from the reigning evangelical scheme of the present day? No honest student of history, we think, can fail to see and confess, that the doctrine of Irenæus and Tertullian on the relation of the bible to the church is essentially one and the same with that which is clearly presented afterwards by Chrysostom and Augustine, and that in sound at least it is very much like the Catholic doctrine as opposed to Protestantism in modern times.

V. Take next the *order of doctrine*. Single truths have their proper value and force, not merely in themselves separately taken, but in the place they occupy as parts of the whole system to which they belong. Much depends then on the order in which they are held. The doctrinal scheme of the early church has come down to us in the Apostles' Creed. Into the question of the origin of this symbol, it is not necessary now to enter. Its universal prevalence in the fourth century is itself argument enough for a thinking mind, that it must have come down from time immemorial before in substantially the same form; but independently of this, it is abundantly plain from the writers of the second century, that the whole theology of that period was shaped in the mind of the church on this model at least, and on no other. But this at once conditions and determines its uni-

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<sup>1</sup> See Rothe's work before quoted; also Möhler's *Patrologie*, pp. 344-357, 737-748.

versal character, setting it in close affinity with the later theology of the Catholic church, and placing it in broad contrariety to the Puritan scheme of doctrine as we now meet with it in New England. Puritanism, by its abstract spiritualistic character, has lost the power to a great extent of understanding both the old creed, and the catholic theology of which it was the foundation; and with a certain feeling of superior maturity is disposed generally to put the whole away as somewhat childish and out of date. The objection is not so much to single points in themselves considered; for most of these may be translated into some good modern sense; but it holds rather against the order in which they are put together, the architecture of the creed, its reigning animus, its too much of one thing and its too little or nothing at all of another. The sound of it is uncomfortably mystical, sacramental and churchly. Puritanism knows very well in its inmost soul, that no *such* creed is the symbol exactly of that form of belief which it now parades as its own, and as being at the same time the only true and perfect sense of the bible. It would never have produced any creed of this sort. It sees all truth in a different order, and holds it in quite other proportions and relations. When it undertakes to give us a creed in fact, (as it is ready to do commonly at a moment's warning and to any order,) the product is something very different from the ancient symbol of the Apostles.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> See an article entitled "Puritanism and the Creed," in the *Mercersburg Review* for November 1849, published at the same time also as a separate tract. It will be remembered, that the *Puritan Recorder*, of Boston, plainly acknowledged "that the Creed and Puritanism have not a kindred spirit," and that only by courtesy it found a place originally in Puritan formularies and catechisms. "Its life and spirit," it was said, "never entered into the life of the Puritan churches; and consequently it now exists among us as some fossil relic of by-gone ages. And we look with a sort of pity upon those who are laboring to infuse life into it, and to set it up as a living ruler in the church. We are free to confess, that this Creed has forsaken the Puritans, and gone over to become the idol and strength of all branches of anti-puritanism. And there are good reasons; for Puritanism builds on the Scriptures, and this Creed teaches, in several respects, anti-scriptural doctrines." It should have been said rather, that Puritanism has forsaken the Creed; breaking away at the same time from the faith of the universal church as it stood in the second century, and while it accepts the bible from the hands of this same church, coolly turning round and saying to it: You never understood your own scriptures; we know what they mean, and you and your creed may go to the tomb of the Capulets. We have never heard of any repudiation of this monstrous sentiment, on the part of the interest thus represented by the *Puritan Recorder*, and take it for granted therefore that it is nothing more than a true picture after all of what must be considered here a general falling away from the *regula fidei* of the primitive church.



There is a real difference, as regards the *tout ensemble* of Christian doctrine between the Patristic system and Protestantism in its original proper form. More than one has felt something of the experience given in the following striking passage from Thiersch. "It is a strange impression," he remarks in his work on the *Canon*, p. 280, "that the church fathers make on one who first enters on the study of them, under the full force of a merely Protestant consciousness. So fared it with the writer himself. Nurtured on the best that the old Protestant books of devotion contain, and trained theologically in the doctrines and interpretations of the orthodox period of Protestantism, he turned finally to the fathers. Well does he remember how strange it appeared to him in the beginning, to find here nothing of those truths, which formed the spring of his whole religious life, nothing of the way the sinner must tread to arrive at peace and an assurance of the Divine favor, nothing of Christ's merit as the only ground of forgiveness, nothing of continual repentance and ever new recourse to the fountain of free grace, nothing of the high confidence of the justified believer. Instead of this, he found that all weight was laid on the incarnation of the Divine Logos, on the right knowledge of the great object of worship, on the objective mystery of the Trinity and of Christ's Person, on the connection between creation, redemption, and the future restoration of the creature along with the glorification also of man's body, on the freedom of man and on the reality of the operations of Divine grace in the sacraments. But he was enabled gradually to live himself into this old mode of thought, and without giving up what is true and inalienable in the Lutheran Protestant consciousness, to correct its on-sidedness by a living appropriation of the theology of the fathers. He soon saw, that over against the errors of the present time, its pantheism and fatalism, its spiritualism and misapprehension of the significance of the corporeal, the church needs a decided taking up again of what is true in the Patristic scheme of thought, and an assimilation of her whole life to the ancient model—in spirit and idea first, as outward relations are not at once under human control. This old primitive church stood out to his view more and more in its full splendor, in its sublime beauty, of which only fragmentary lineaments are to be recognised in the churches, confessions and sects, of the present day."

Thiersch here finds Protestantism itself materially different from early Christianity; while he holds it however, in its legitimate character, capable of a living conjunction with the ancient faith, though carrying in itself a fearful tendency to fall away

from it altogether; a tendency, which is now getting the mastery of it in truth in many places, and that needs to be counteracted by a return to former ideas. What he has his eye upon immediately is the rationalism surrounding him in Germany. But the tendency is not limited to that form of open unbelief. It lies in all unchurchly religion. It animates the whole sect system. It forms the proper soul of Puritanism. This is not original Protestantism, carrying in it the *possibility* merely of a full dissociation from the mind of the ancient church; but it is this possibility actually realized. It is a growth completely to the one side, which refuses now all organic agreement with the trunk of Christian doctrine as this stood in the beginning. The two schemes of thought are quite apart, and can never be made to fit together with any sort of symmetry or ease. Puritanism, by its very constitution, ignores and abjures the *old* sense of the Apostles' Creed.

VI. Look finally at the subject of *faith in miracles*. It is well known, that the early church not only believed firmly in the miracles of Christ and his Apostles, as well as in those of the Old Testament, but had a most firm persuasion also that the same power was still actively displayed in her own bosom, and that it lay in her commission in truth to look for its revelation, as occasion might require, "always to the end of the world." It is generally admitted even among Protestants not openly rationalistic, (though some feel it necessary with the celebrated Dr. Conyers Middleton to take different ground through fear of Popery,) that many supernatural signs and wonders were wrought in the service of Christianity during the first three ages. But what we have to do with just now is not so much the actual truth of these miracles, as the state of mind on the part of the church itself, by which they were considered possible, and which led to their being readily received on all sides as nothing more than the natural and proper fruit of the new religion. The apologists appeal to them boldly as notorious facts. Both Irenæus and Tertullian challenge the heretics to prove their authority by miracles, as the church did hers in every direction; and the proofs mentioned are such as giving sight to the blind and hearing to the deaf, casting out devils, healing sicknesses, and even raising the dead to life. To question the fact of miracles in the church, would have been in this period equivalent to downright infidelity. It lay in the whole sense the church then had of the realness and nearness of the supernatural world, in her felt apprehension of the living communion in which she stood with it through Christ, that such demonstrations of its

presence should be regarded as most perfectly possible, and in some sort as a matter of course. Her idea of *faith* was such, as of itself involved this from the very start.

But who needs to be told, how different from all this the tone of thought is that now pervades the universal empire of Puritanism? The difference is not in the mere want of miracles; though that is something too for a thoughtful mind; it appears rather, under a more alarming and affecting view, in the want of power to exercise faith in anything of the sort. Puritanism pretends indeed to great faith in the invisible and supernatural; just as the Gnostics did also in ancient times. But its faith, like theirs, is in the language of Ignatius wonderfully asomatic and unreal. The action of the supernatural is remanded by it to the world of mere thought. God works miracles now in the souls of his people; and away back in the shadow land of the past, he wrought them by special dispensation also under a more outward form. But the age of such proper wonders is long since past. It is unsafe to speak of them after the third century, and not very wise to lay much stress on them even in the second. All pretensions to anything of the sort may be set down at once, and without any examination, as purely "lying wonders." Such we all know to be the reigning habit of thought here, with this popular system. Dr. Middleton's theory suits it to a tittle, and is drawn as it were from its very soul. Puritanism has no faith in miracles answerable at all to what prevailed in the early church, no power we may say to believe them in the same way. Its inward relation to the world from which miracles come, is by no means the same. The difference is not in the judgment exercised in regard to this particular miracle or that, but in the total frame of the mind with regard to the universal subject. This is not faith, but absolute scepticism, just as complete as anything we meet with in Gibbon, Voltaire, or Hume.<sup>1</sup>

The martyrs of Lyons knew nothing of such scepticism. It required another sense of the "powers of the world to come,"

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<sup>1</sup> Both the N. Y. Observer and the N. Y. Churchman, representing but too faithfully we fear the spirit of their respective communions, noticed not long since with pure derision a sermon by Dr. Forbes, the late convert to Romanism, in defence of the idea that Christ has continued to fulfil his promise of miracles in the later ages of the church. The misery of all this is, not that this or that wonder of popular belief in the Catholic church may be shown to be false and ridiculous, but that the basis on which alone any such popular beliefs are made possible, the sense namely of the supernatural order of Christianity as a real and ever present fountain of the miraculous in the church, is rationalistically undermined and destroyed.

to carry so many simple and plain persons, with such triumphant courage, through the scenes that are described in the account of their martyrdom. They had no difficulty in admitting the reality of signs and wonders in the church. Nay, these had place in connexion with their own sufferings, and are reported by Irenæus, (the supposed writer of the account,) as carrying in them nothing incredible whatever. Blandina, a weak slave, was regarded as being upheld, quite beyond the common course of nature, in the terrible torments through which she was made to pass, from the break of day till night. The deacon Sanctus was tortured with hot plates of brass and in other ways, till his body became so covered with wounds and bruises that the very figure of it was lost; a few days after which he was brought out again, when it was supposed that the inflammation of his sores would cause him, under the repetition of the same cruelties, either to yield at once or expire. But "to the amazement of all, his body under the latter torments recovered its former strength and shape, and the exact use of all his limbs was restored; so that by this miracle of the grace of Jesus Christ, what was designed as an additional pain, proved an absolute and effectual cure." The martyr appeared to move in a perfect nimbus of supernatural grace; even "their bodies sent forth such an agreeable and pleasant savor, as gave occasion to think that they used perfumes."<sup>1</sup> The wild beasts of the amphitheatre, to which she was exposed, could not be provoked to touch Blandina. One of the martyrs "had a revelation" in regard to another, which this last made it his business dutifully to follow. What remained of the bodies, after the terrible tragedy, was burned to ashes, and thrown into the waters of the Rhone; but it was believed, that a part of these ashes was afterwards miraculously recovered, and the relics were deposited under the altar of the church which anciently bore the name of the Apostles of Lyons.

We say nothing of the credibility of these statements, nothing of the opinion we should have of what they pretend to describe. We hold them up simply as a picture of the mind that was in the church in the days of Pothinus and Irenæus; and in view

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<sup>1</sup> It is related in the acts of the martyrdom of St. Polycarp, written by the church of Smyrna, that when fire was set to the pile prepared to burn him the "flames forming themselves into an arch, like the sails of a ship swelled with the wind, gently encircled the body of the martyr, which stood in the middle, resembling not roasted flesh, but purified gold or silver, appearing bright through the flames; and his body sending forth such a fragrance, that we seemed to smell precious spices."

of it we have no hesitation in saying, that Dr. Bacon is altogether mistaken, when he finds its *facsimile*, either in Mr. Fisch's evangelical congregation of the present Lyons, or under the keen sharp features of Puritanism in any part of New England.

It would be easy to extend this contrast to other points. Veneration for the *relics* of deceased saints comes into view, as far back as our eye can reach. The bones of Ignatius, who was martyred at Rome under 'Trajan in the beginning of the second century, were carefully gathered up after his death, we are told, and carried back to Antioch his episcopal see. According to Chrysostom, they were borne in triumph on the shoulders of all the cities through Asia Minor. In Antioch they were placed finally in a church distinguished by his name, which St. Chrysostom encourages people in his day to visit, as having been to many the means of undoubted help both spiritually and corporally. In the case of Polycarp, the church of Smyrna writes that the malice of the devil was exerted to prevent his relics being carried off by the Christians; "for many desired to do it, to show their respect to his body." At the suggestion of the Jews, the proconsul was advised not to give the body into their hands, lest they should pass from the worship of the crucified one to the worship of Polycarp; "not knowing," say the acts, "that we can never forsake Christ, nor adore any other, though we love the martyrs, as his disciples and imitators, for the great love they bore their king and master." The corpse accordingly was reduced to ashes. "We afterwards took up the bones," the church adds, "more precious than the richest jewels or gold, and deposited them decently in a place, at which may God grant us to assemble with joy, to celebrate the birthday of the martyr." How different all this is from the spirit of modern Puritanism, even a child may see and feel. But the veneration for relics is itself only the proof and sign of a great deal more, embraced in the article of the "communion of saints" as it was held in the early church, every vestige of which has disappeared from the thinking of this later system. It is equally evident again, that the church of the second century attributed a peculiar merit to the state of celibacy and virginity, embraced for the glory of God and in the service of religion, which falls in fully with the tone of thought we find afterwards established in the Roman Catholic communion, but is as much at war as can well be imagined with the entire genius of Puritanism in every form and shape. It is not necessary, however, to push the comparison any farther, in the consideration of these or of other kindred points. Our general purpose is abundantly answered, our cause more than

made out, by the topics of proof and illustration already presented.

The Puritan hypothesis, we now repeat, is false. There never was any such period of unchurchly evangelicalism as it assumes, in the history of early Christianity. Its whole dream of a golden age, answerable to its own taste and fashion, after the time of the New Testament and back of what it takes to be the grand apostacy that comes into view in the third century, is as perfectly baseless as any vision could well be. It rests upon mere air. It has not a syllable of true historical evidence in its favor; while the universal drift of proof is directly against it. Those then who will have it that New England Puritanism is the true image of what Christianity was at the start, and that the church tendency as it appears in universal force afterwards was from the start a corruption only, must take still higher ground than even this dizzy imagination; they must make up their mind, with the heroic Baptists, to look upon the history of the church as a grand falling away from its original design and type, as soon as it passed out of the hands of the Apostles, and long before the last of these in fact had gone to his rest. To this the theory comes in the end; and with the great body of those who hold it, this probably is the sense that always lurks in it at the bottom. But we need have no hesitation surely in saying, that every view of *this* sort is fatal to the credibility of the Gospel. It is only Gnosticism in disguise.

Our faith in the realness of Christianity will not allow us to bear the thought, that it fell from the very outset into the gulph-stream of a total apostacy, which carried the universal church, without resistance or knowledge, right onward always to the shipwreck of a thousand years—while Christ was showing himself by infallible signs both present and awake in the vessel, and miracles of faith and zeal prevailed on every side. It will not do; the whole supposition is monstrous. Puritanism is mistaken. It is a thousand times safer to interpret the meaning of Christianity from its own actual history in the beginning, than it is to sit at the feet now of any such modern authority, spinning the sense of it from the clouds. As to the likelihood of apostacy and wholesale error, in the main difference between the two forms of teaching, we believe the chances to be immeasurably in favor of antiquity and against the modern authority. It is far easier to believe Puritanism an apostacy, in its rejection of the *mystery* of the church and its sacraments, than it is to brand the universal faith of the second and third centuries with any such character, for the acknowledgment of this mystery as

something quite above the range of reason and common sense. We choose to go here with the early church. We do not believe that it fell into apostacy, as a whole, from the very outset of its course; that it mistook fundamentally the sense and meaning of the faith delivered to it by the Apostles; that it was almost immediately overpowered by a new and foreign idea, a "mystery of iniquity" that turned it finally into the synagogue of Satan. We detest and abhor any imagination of this sort; and pray God that our children may be kept from every such miserable tradition, as a true snare of the Devil that looks directly to rationalism and infidelity. There were faults and corruptions no doubt in the history of the church; but there was no such falling away from its own proper and primitive idea, as Puritanism finds it necessary constantly to assert. The reigning course of Christianity was right, and in full conformity with the will of Him who so visibly presided over it "on the right hand of the Majesty on high." The habit of doctrine and worship in which such men as Augustine, Ambrose, Chrysostom, Cyprian stood, which animated the martyrs of Lyons and Vienne, and glowed in the seraphic ardor of Polycarp and Ignatius, must have been in the main, not diabolical, not superstitious, but true to the genius of the Gospel as it was "first spoken by the Lord and confirmed by them that heard him—God also bearing them witness both with signs and wonders, and with divers miracles, and gifts of the Holy Ghost, according to his own will." This implies of course that even the Papacy itself, *to-wards* which at least the whole system was carried with intrinsic necessity from the beginning, came in with reason and right, and had a mission to fulfil in the service of Christianity that could not have been fulfilled as well in any other way. No one indeed can study the history of the church soberly, it seems to us, without seeing this in the actual course of events. The grand bulwark of the true religion, through the whole period of the middle ages, was beyond all question the ecclesiastical organization that centered in the popes or bishops of Rome. Without this, the church would have fallen to pieces, hundreds of years before the Reformation. Only suppose the Papacy to have been overwhelmed by Mohammedanism, or by the German emperors, or by the wild fury of the Albigenses and other such Manichean sects, and what would there have been left of the glorious mystery of Christianity as it first stood, either to reform or mend in the sixteenth century?

If the cause of Protestantism then is to be successfully maintained, it must be on some other ground than the common Puri-

tan assumption, that it is just what Christianity was in the beginning, and that all variations from it in antiquity are to be set to the account of a devilish apostacy, of which Popery was at last the consummation and end. Come what may of the Reformation, there are certain general maxims of faith here which we can never safely renounce. We must hold fast to the divine origin of the church, and to its divine continuity from the beginning down to the present time. We must see and admit, that Protestantism is no return simply to Primitive Christianity. Its connection with this is *through* the Roman Catholic church only, as the real continuation of the older system. In no other view can it be acknowledged, as the historical and legitimate succession of this ancient faith. This implies, however, that the life of Protestantism must be one with the life of the church as it stood previously. It is to be taken as different from this indeed in the rejection of many accidental corruptions, but not in distinctive substance and spirit. Its doctrines and habits must be felt to grow forth, with true inward vitality, from the faith that has been accredited as divine from the beginning, by the promise and miraculous providence of Christ. Puritanism then, by abjuring this historical and organic relationship to the ancient church, does what it can in truth to ruin the cause of genuine Protestantism. It brings in another Gospel. It throws us on the terrible dilemma: "Either Ancient Christianity was intrinsically false, or Protestantism is a bold imposture"; for it makes this last to be the pure negation and contradiction of the first. But when it comes to this, what sound mind can pause in its choice? To create such a dilemma, we say then, is to fight against the Reformation. Puritanism, carrying upon its hard front these formidable horns, is no better than treason and death to Protestantism.

J. W. N.



## TRAPPER'S LIFE.

THE Anglo Saxon era in North America resembles a magnificent rehearsal. It presents in the form of an abridgement the prominent features of the progress of society, from the beginning until the present time; it gives social phases of every cast, from a simple to a highly civilized state. The majestic romance of time has been dramatized, and America affords to the world-audience the boards upon which the scenes of the great human play, embracing centuries at one lifting of the curtain, are represented. We greet in our western hemisphere the rejuvenescence of the old world, and we trace with living eyes the enactment of the human story from its beginning. Like the days of the Creation, or the weeks of the prophet Daniel, time, in our plot, is the symbolization of its greater self, and the condensed statement of the present is a glowing miniature-show of ages. In this cosmoramic exhibition, we may see at once upon the platform all the several degrees of civilization clearly displayed by the Anglo Saxon, from that of the semi-civilized trapper at the one limit to that of the polished citizen at the other. Geographical gradations here correspond to the gradations of time in the old European world. The meditative eye, as it passes from the Rocky Mountains to the cities of the Atlantic, may survey a line of social progression, coincident in the main with the course of progress that marked those vast transition periods of society, respectively represented in the history of man by Hercules, Ulysses, Themistocles and Pericles: those periods, whose marvellous and mystic phases the kindred genius of ancient Greece has so charmingly embroidered upon the tapestry of history.

Human nature, as it were glad of the chance, blithely accepts the offer of providence here, and returns to its primitive normal usages. The yearnings expressed by Ponce-de-Leon are gratified in a more general sense, and man is permitted to sojourn again in the childhood experiences of his nature. He assumes again, not in frolic, each mould and aspect he has ever worn, and thus confirms in some sort the doctrine of the Platonic year.

The American trapper has dropped upon the earth after his time. His splendid physical heroism is fitted for an epical era—an era of myth. Had Kit Carson and Bill Williams flourished in the heroic ages, they would have matched Theseus and Idas in magnificence of exploit:—they would have been ranked by following generations with the demi-gods for their shining

deeds, and have had their apotheosis registered with that of Castor and Pollux in the bright enduring heavens.

We propose to make some observations on the character and life of the Trapper. He will soon become the property of history,—a phenomenon of the past. The living fact he presents will hardly survive the living generation. The economy of the times, in its unblushing researches, has not respected even the pitiful interests and dearly-bought earnings of this recluse of the great West. The substitution of the fur-seal and nutria, and the preparation of the skins of other less valuable fur-bearing animals, together with the unlimited use of silk in the manufacture of hats, are making every year the trapping of beaver an object of less consideration. Already many of this class have cast away their traps, and are constructing adobe hovels along the outskirts of the Mexican settlements, or beginning to upturn the virgin soil in distant view of the Mormons. "The depreciation in the value of beaver skins has thrown the great body of trappers out of employment, and there is a general tendency among the mountain men to settle in the fruitful valleys of the Rocky Mountains. Already the plow has turned up the soil within sight of Pike's Peak, and a hardy pioneer, an Englishman, has led the way to the Great Salt Lake, where a settlement of mountaineers has even now been formed, three thousand miles from the frontier of the United States." Again: "The demand for the trapper's services now is not as it once was. The price of furs has depreciated so much as to drive him to other engagements. Even since 1838, all who could have been abandoning this mode of life, and Oregon and California have opened rare opportunities for the adventurous spirits of the Plains."<sup>a</sup>

The domains of the trapper are but ill-defined in their spacious outlines. In general they embrace all that immense area of mountain and plain lying between the States and the Pacific. The southern term of this vast tract gradually loses itself amid the wide-sown settlements of Northern Mexico. The ancient missions of the Jesuits and Franciscans, together with the recently formed gold colonies in California, and the settlements on the Columbia, limit its approaches to the western ocean. Its northern frontier vacillates far within the confines of that shadowy unexplored realm of impenetrable forests and frozen lakes, clos-

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<sup>a</sup> Mexico and the Rocky Mountains, by S. F. Ruxton, 1849.

<sup>a</sup> Letter of a Missouri Gentleman, August 21st, 1851.

ed to all civilization, which is known only on the maps as being a part of the great British empire. In this magnificent field of nature, extending through twenty degrees of latitude, the Blackfeet, Crows, Sioux, Pawnees, Camanches and other ferocious tribes, on the one side of the Sierra Madre and Rocky Mountains, and the Apaches, Utahs and Shoshones, on the other, wander at will. This territory, in all its length and breadth, is the trapper's hunting ground and home. Its mountains and forests are traversed by him in every direction. Its rivers, and smaller confluent streams, are searched downward their whole length from their sources, and trapped for beaver. Many hundreds of these men, employed by the different fur companies are dispersed singly and in pairs over this whole region.<sup>1</sup> This free imperial range, illimitable as it seems, has been greatly disturbed, the last few years, by the torrent of emigration drawn through its centre, in consequence of the national acquisitions from Mexico, the western localization of Mormonism, and the gold discoveries.

The habits of the American trapper display an entire harmony with his condition and circumstances. By a strange transmutation, the civilized rudiments of his character have become the nutrient soil of barbarous developments, like those ancient ruins of Yucatan over which a wild tropical vegetation exhibits its most sturdy growth. His life is wholly removed from the restraints of society, and those unwritten conventional laws which regulate the thousand proprieties of conduct, which adjust the outward moral tone and aspect of human intercourse, and give to the deportment of man its social charm and polish, are as unknown to him as the institutes of Calvin. His character has taken its hues from the complexion of surrounding scenes, and modeled in the image of savage nature betrays a striking combination of simplicity and ferocity. The animal food taken almost raw, upon which he wholly subsists, tends to blunt his finer sensibilities, and to promote the truculence of his nature. His wants are few. His buckskin costume is everlasting in its wear. With his rifle in hand, upon the prairie or mountain height, he is like the reaper in his own harvest field. Constant exposure has rendered him indifferent to the approach of danger. Crafty and patient, he consults the instincts of primitive man, and rivals the Indian in detecting the haunts of an enemy. The laws of God

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<sup>1</sup> In these boundless wastes the greatest and most noted trapping ground is on Green (Colorado) river, beyond Fort Laramie, as well as on the streams beyond Budger's and Vasque's fort.

he does not know, those of men he does not care to remember. It was perhaps the fancied abridgement of his liberties by the latter, that led him first to cast his life upon the domains of nature, and the exile will not brook that the system which has ostracized him should, even by the feeblest prestige of its remembrance, haunt him in his solitude. His unfettered wishes form the code by which his actions are governed.

In the fierce contests of the passions, none perhaps displays itself with more signal energy than that of revenge. It is, we believe, the peculiar honor of the Gospel among all religions, and the shining token of its superhuman origin, that with its sublime doctrine of forgiveness it has shorn of its strength this Agonistes of man's depraved nature. But the highly seasoned banquet to which the trapper is accustomed to treat his innate propensities, gives this characteristic the full means of maintaining in his case its terrible ascendancy. It glares fiercely through all his achievements. These achievements, it is true, are remarkable. They rank as high in their gross sense among heroic deeds, as the Rocky mountains upon which they are transacted among the mountains of the globe. But as the Wind River chain owes its brilliancy to the perpetual snows which in a temperate latitude crown its summit—to a cause which forbids the spread of all genial verdure, so none but a frigid mind, and frozen state of the kindly affections, could exhibit the wild prowess, and display the inhuman feats of revenge, that signalize the trapper's history. We will mention here two instances for all. We choose them, not that they are marked by special atrocity in mountain adventure, for this is by no means the case, but because in addition to their retaliatory aspect, they serve to exhibit, to some extent, the reckless daring of the trapper. Col. Fremont, in his Report of the Exploring Expedition which traversed California under his command, relates an adventure under this head on the part of two trappers; one of whom was Kit Carson, the Chevalier Bayard of mountain chivalry, the other, Godey, a St. Louis Frenchman. To avenge the massacre of two New Mexicans, and recover some stolen horses, these men rode at a hard gallop from sixty to a hundred miles, charged at daybreak into an Indian village filled with *braves*, (save the mark!), dispersed the savages like a herd of deer before them, and returned to camp with the lost animals and two propitiatory scalps.

An exploit of a similar character was performed, whilst a party, consisting of twelve or fifteen trappers, was sweeping a few years ago like a whirlwind through the mountains, under the

direction of 'Old Walker.' It had left the head waters of the Platte, for the purpose of making a swoop upon the mission of San Fernando, on the Las Animas, and carrying off the choice cattle and horses belonging to the sacred precincts. A body of the Apaches had stolen one night some horses of the band, and murdered the horse-guard. Next morning five of the trappers, mounted upon strong horses, followed the Indians upon their trail, through the mountains, to their village, there charged headlong among them, recovered their stolen property, and returned to their comrades at sundown, with thirteen scalps of these nomadic robbers dangling from their rifles.

The doom of Ishmael, 'whose hand was against every man and every man's hand against him,' is but the necessary condition of a barbarous state. At the heart of all life reigns selfishness. This principle, whose impetuous impulses are attempered by beneficent checks in a state of civilized society, becomes autocratic in a state of nature. Every man does that which seems good in his sight. The trapper's reckless disregard of Indian rights is transparent through all his actions. He is consequently an object of hatred to all the neighboring tribes, and to all he presents a dauntless front. Thus on the prairie, or in the mountains, it is with him a perpetual game of life and death. His mind is ever upon the bend. A turned leaf, a disconcerted blade of grass, the flight of a bird, or the significant look of his mule, may convey to his practised powers of observation a lesson of the deepest import to his welfare. He has learned to decipher, with the facility of a native, this language of moving symbols. The equal of the savage here, he is his superior beside in powers of wit and contrivance, which inure to him through his civilized origin. So that for every scalp of a trapper that enlivens an Indian war dance, the trapper 'lifts the hair' of at least ten red skins.

He sometimes, from motives of policy, forms an alliance with the tribe upon whose grounds he is trapping. He adopts as a matter of course for the time its politics, such as they are, and shares its national feuds. Were it not like sullyng the impassioned moral grace of the beautiful language of Ruth to Naomi, we might use that language to express happily the trapper's agreement in this league with the tribe: "Whither thou goest I will go, and where thou lodgest I will lodge; thy people shall be my people, and thy God my God."

Let us pause here to consider how it is, that civilized man lapses with such facility into the barbarities of savage life. Selfishness, we have already remarked, is a great organic principle

of life, and always ascendant in a barbarous state. Encircled as we happily are by circumstances of another kind, nothing less than a strong effort of the imagination can enable us to trace the changes leading to intellectual and moral debasement, which are wrought upon the trapper by his removal from society. We must consider in general how, as the harvest man throws aside his coat, he has thrown aside the social affections; how he has separated himself from sympathy with all the healthful interests which animate the public world; how, in his state of isolation, he feels no longer within him even the remote pulsations of the great heart of humanity. Let any one analyze his own nature, and see whether its nobler qualities have not flourished chiefly under the sunshine of home, community, and church; let him see whether these interests have not all along given the strong check to the imperious native principle of selfishness, and whether he is not indebted to them for the development and moulding of his own best manhood. Let him do this, and he will be able to appreciate, to some extent, the condition of the trapper, whose life has been wholly sundered from these beneficent institutions of providence.

An element of barbarism may readily take growth in a negative condition of the mind,—in its failure to consider habitually and attentively the wants and feelings of others. Human nature needs, to sustain its better qualities, the mollifying power of active sympathy. The dark side of society,—that side which gloomily discloses the pains and sorrows of human life, which reveals female tears and infirmities side by side with the wants and dependence of childhood, is not to be regarded as a flaw in the world's social constitution. It has its great ameliorating intention. It exerts a remedial influence upon the barbarous tendencies of the strong man. It acts as did the wand of Moses upon the rock. It draws forth streams of tenderness, which by reciprocal action refresh again these weak afflicted ones. The sealed fountain is broken, and its healing waters leap forth through the flinty mould of the mind. The desert of the heart is made to blossom like the rose.

The *family* and the *church* are indispensable conditions of pure civilization. Even in the midst of society, as we have it around us, they are called into daily struggle with the selfish downward drift of man's nature. Consider a man as he appears in the strife of worldly business, subject to the hourly collisions of sordid interest,—consider the gross forms of selfishness which the contentions of external life strengthen and fortify within him, until with compressed lips and inflected brows he schools

himself to the purpose of proscribing all humane and tender emotions, and resolves to brave and browbeat the cold heartless world with its own malignant weapons. Note these tendencies of secular life, and then bless the domestic corrective given in God's kind providence to mankind. The morose worldling passes from the marts of trade, or from sweaty field labors to the door of his home. Now look how his stern visage begins to relax, as helpless childhood waddles toward his embrace; how his fierce selfish resolves melt away like April snow, when he finds that his wants and comforts have been cared for, and that loving confiding ones, clambering over his knees, and clasping his brawny neck, are expecting from him offices of kindness. The lesson of the day is forgotten in the lesson of the evening.

So again practical philanthropy is grounded upon the doctrines of grace. A sense of divine mercy and the remission of sins is necessary to produce the elements of genuine good will toward all mankind. Divine compassion, copious and free, dispensing pardon and kindling hope, impresses itself upon the susceptibility of the human heart, until that heart, like the sweet nightly moon, sheds in turn the reflected grace of the bright original. But the church must school its subject, to discriminate between consistent christian views of divine clemency and mere rapid freethinking conceptions of the same. The latter, like the apples of Sodom, serve in the end but to mock human hope. The church, when true to its office, portrays divine mercy in the midst of justice,—justice displayed with all its penal consequences,—to give it in men's minds its true value. The tenet of mercy rests upon the tenet of wrath, and it is this that gives it its essential prominence. It is like the rainbow, which glows promissorially when drawn upon the darkly rolling cloud, whose flashing thunders have filled us with awe, but which would have no significance if seen to arch the smiling red of a tranquil sunset. By enforcing these correlative truths, the church humbles the pride of man, abates his selfishness, and constrains him to adopt the pity of God as the habit of his moral life. "We pray for mercy, and that same prayer doth teach us all to render the deeds of mercy."

If these views be correct, if the whole force of the family and church be hardly sufficient to restrain the barbarous proclivities of man, when placed within the circle of their direct influence, then may heaven have mercy upon the recluse trapper! The syllepsis used by Christ to the daughters of Jerusalem, may with a liberal construction be applied to him: "If they do these things in a green tree, what shall be done in a dry." The im-



pressions made upon the morning of his life, by the household and sanctuary, have gone like morning dews. Even the Sabbath, which followed him into the wilderness, he has wrested from God. He has become in consequence a barbarian.

Let us pass from these reflections now to the Rocky mountains, and view the trapper at home. In the silent interior of those mountains, upon an affluent of one of those mighty rivers, which, from the same lofty circle within sight of Fremont's Peak, flow diversly to the Pacific or to the Gulf of Mexico, he encamps for the season. His lodge is a frame of willows, covered with two or three deer-skins. A slender pole laid across from bough to bough between two neighboring trees, strung with choice pieces of buffalo, beaver-tail and venison, above the reach of wolf or coyote, constitutes his larder. He has chosen for his encampment a picturesque yet convenient locality. Upon the north, a lofty battlement of rocks impends to shelter the spot from the sweep of the wild mountain storms, whilst between the ridges stretching right and left the horizontal beams of the morning and evening sun may enter to brighten glen, cascade, and green acclivity, in front of him. For months he never looks upon a human face. Yet the solitary trapper, in his gross way, enjoys life. Like the salient yearling in shaded pastures, he exults in the thrilling sense of animal enjoyment. He sallies forth every morning, in his barbarous costume, to visit his traps, with a fresh elastic tread. His dress is characteristic: a hunting frock of buckskin ornamented with long fringes, pantaloons of the same fabric embellished with porcupine quills, and fringes reaching down outside the whole length of the leg. He wears deerskin moccasins on his feet, and a flexible hat of felt on his head. Nothing can be more charming than his mountain path, or more inspiring than the semi-tropical vegetation, that, in the midst of that treeless range of mountains, skirts the wild stream in front of him. There is the fragrant sombre cone of the pine and cedar, there the huge spreading arms of the oak, the summer-flowering dome of the chestnut, and the bowery screen of the wild grape, as stretching from tree to tree it ever woos with inconstant affection another and another love. The air bathes him with a delicious freshness, and the blue sky has the purity if not the balm of the Ionian heaven.<sup>1</sup> A troop of bounding

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<sup>1</sup> All traders, trappers, and California gold diggers, with whom we have conversed in *propria persona* or in books, unite in praising the atmosphere of the Plains and Rocky mountains. They are in raptures with the dry pure elastic character of the air, and the delicious transparent blue of the



antelopes, or the stately tread of an elk, will now and then bring down the rifle from his shoulder. High on inaccessible crags, standing like statues of themselves, groups of the mountain sheep or bighorn look down upon him, like motionless sentinels of nature stationed upon her citadels in that wild realm.

Not unfrequently fortune brings together several of these mountain men, during their migrations from stream to stream in quest of beaver. Another view of the trapper's life presents itself then. For a day or two the cares of trapping are remitted, and the season is given to social amusement. The most common diversion to which these athletic huntsmen resort on such occasions, is firing at a mark. A blaze is hewed upon a tree, and a rude bull's eye sketched with wet powder forms a primitive target. The rough applause, which follows a centre-shot at a hundred paces, is worth to the marksman the price of his rifle. At night they encircle their blazing camp fire, and the social sentiment, so long sealed up, now glows like a transparency in every look, word, and gesture. The virtues of his rifle, the wisdom of his horse, or the thrift and shrewdness of the beaver, are topics of boundless enthusiasm with each speaker. Nor does the audience form an idle group upon these occasions. By the light and aid of the central fire, one, it may be, is employed cleaning his rifle, another melting down lead for bullets, and another repairing his torn moccasins. Amid this scene of industry thrilling adventures with the savages are related, and are heard almost with an air of indifference by men who have learned to look upon the most perilous occurrences as in keeping with the reasonable expectation of life. Around upon the level pla-

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heavens. "The moon," remarks one who was ordinarily no poet, "shone upon us with an effulgence almost equal to that of a vertical sun, and the starry firmament, when there was no moon, glowed with a brilliancy and glory we had never before witnessed." A curious incident in the journal of W. H. Richardson, a private soldier under Col. Doniphan's command during his wild irruption into Mexico, mentioned as having occurred at the battle of Sacramento, gives strange confirmation to the statement. "It is a fact worthy of note," he says, "that the atmosphere here in this mountainous region is so perfectly pure and clear that a cannon shot can be seen coming, when it is a considerable distance off, by leaving a blue streak in the air. Many a soldier saved his life in the battle by dodging the balls as they came forward. When a flash would be seen from the enemy's battery, you could hear the soldiers cry out—'Watch the ball, boys!—here comes a ball, boys,' and they invariably avoided them, or the slaughter must have been very great. I saw a ball coming in the direction where I was, when immediately falling off my mule it passed just over my saddle without injury."

teau they occupy, their horses and mules are tethered. The light of the shining fire exhibits through the quiet night the submissive contented forms of these animals, as standing or reclining they enjoy a kind of half sleep, happily relieved from travel and scorching sun and prairie flies.

But the 'Rendezvous,' to which the trapper repairs during the latter part of the summer, embraces for him the great holiday interest of the year. It holds out for him during his sequestered ramblings a prospect equivalent to that, which a London winter offers to the opulent rural gentry in the remote districts of England. Here then we may see the highest style of the trapper's life. The wassail of Christmass and New-Years', the epicurism of Easter, and the turbulent patriotism of the Fourth-of-July, together with the grosser characteristics of all other good days, so well known to children and all true catholics, combined, compounded, and moulded into a festal pattern, would, if divested of their least obnoxious features, furnish something like a type to represent the orgies which here for weeks disgrace the place. A spot is chosen for this great annual fair somewhere in the wild interior of the Rocky mountains, generally within some timbered mountain valley upon the head-waters of the Colorado. The skin of the beaver during the dog-days is of little value, and accordingly the different fur companies, under whose auspices the rendezvous is held, meet then through their agents, the trappers and hunters, and receive from them the products of their skill and industry for the year. Several hundred of these mountain men will often assemble together at one of these haunts. Hordes belonging to the neighboring Indian tribes will also repair to the spot, and encamp in the vicinity. Hither too traders from Missouri and the Mexican settlements are accustomed to resort, well supplied with alcohol and such other goods as are adapted to the mountain market. The trappers enter the encampment on horseback, singly or in small bands, and drag after them their ill-looking mules now burdened with costly packs of beaver. Trapping has proved to many of them a lucrative pursuit. They frequently cast upon the ground, at their arrival, as the fruit of the year's labor, from one to two thousand dollars' worth of peltries. The fair now opens with a brisk trade in furs and buffalo skins on the part of the free trappers;—i. e., those trappers who have not hypothecated their services to any of the fur companies for their outfit, and who offer their peltries at the rendezvous to the highest bidder. At a time when the clink of silver is so distinctly heard, the *traders* are by no means idle spectators. Some of this class are young men from the eastern cities, in

truth fine hearty fellows, who enliven the virile sodality of the encampment with flashes of wit and peals of laughter. But others are the dark-visaged conscripts of Moloch, who in their transit through the fires of Tophet, have had every sentiment of humanity crisped and consumed within them. Upon the rude stands they have erected, alcohol diluted to the agreeable strength of old Monongehela whisky is conspicuously placed. The trappers, with their dry leathern throats stimulating them to the sacrifice, soon part at these tempting retail stations with their hard-earned wealth.

But this mountain retreat is not consecrated to the genius of traffic alone. Interests of a wholly different kind throw a charm over the place for this motley concourse of men. Removed, as they are at this spot, a thousand miles from civilized abodes, the menacing arm of the civil law is not seen in the distance, the monitory tones of the church bell are not heard. Vice smiles here in broad daylight, and without a blush beckons all to her entertainments. Every desire, with the trapper, becomes a propensity, every propensity a passion, and every passion a disease. An unconditional surrender to dissipation is the order of the season, and gross scenes of drunken folly fill up the circle of each day. Exercises in running, wrestling, boxing, leaping, and pitching the quoit,—the quinquertium of the ancient Olympic Games, are his least exceptionable forms of diversion. But even in these exercises which sometimes enliven the glades around the encampment, we look in vain to the trapper for a shadow of that intellectual grace which enabled the semi-civilized Greek to discern a full reward for the contest in a chaplet of olive,—to trace through the beautiful symbolization a meed more precious than diamonds, and worth the loftiest human endeavors:—that grace of intellect, indigenous in the pristine life of Greece, which under this civic crown dispensed tones of exalted virtue to whose echoes the world, with the reverence of childhood, still loves to listen. The mind of the American trapper is cast in a much rougher mould. But we must admit, that whilst those sublime traits of character which shine down upon us from distant ages, like the stars from heaven, have been withheld from him, he is nevertheless eminently endowed with those superb physical qualities which ever dazzle the mind of sense, and elicit the strongest sympathy from the plebeian crowd. Thus feats of agility and strength are no doubt performed in these retired Olympia, which, if known, would cause the admirers of Yankee Sullivan or of Tom Hyer to clap their hands with surpassing glee. This presumption may lead us to regret that no

American Pindar lives to enshrine in immortal odes the glory of these buckskin contests,—a glory which, in the present state of things, is doomed to elicit nothing better than the uproarious applause of a few traders and Indian hunters, reclining lazily under the adjacent cotton-wood.

The trapper has a morbid passion for gambling. In the shade by day, and around the fires by night, groups may be constantly seen, seated upon the ground after the Indian mode, with blankets spread before them, engaged at play. The currency of the mountains is beaver; and the stakes are always estimated by that standard. In a brief hour or so, a large mountain fortune often passes, upon the luck of cards, to a second or third ownership. The infatuated trapper, who is stripped of his wealth, not unfrequently proceeds in his phrensy to stake his horse, mule, rifle, hunting equipments, and, if he has one, even his Indian wife. The interest of the lookers on always deepens in proportion to the desperation of the game. The agony of the loser has an indefinable charm for natures, to which the sight of human distress has become an agreeable excitement. They apprise the encampment of all such shadowy passages in play, by shouting, in tones widely removed from those of gentle sympathy: "There goes hos and beaver."

No wonder that under the excitement of cards frequent brawls should ensue. In the settlement of disputes on such occasions by the laws of honor, these semi-barbarous scions of the Anglo-Saxon stock waive generally those factitious ceremonials which dignify the duels of their more polished kindred. The parties withdraw on the instant to a neighboring glade, and having marked off at a guess twenty paces, decide at once the justice of the quarrel with their rifles. The inevitable death of one, if not of both, follows, and peace is again transiently restored in the encampment.

At certain periods a softer grace is shed over the rough features of the scene. Young Indian girls, fantastically painted, and having their graceful persons bedecked with savage ornaments, emerge like nymphs from the surrounding defiles, and enter the rendezvous. A scene follows then which, if carefully studied, might impart some useful hints even to those in more polished society, who wish to become proficient in the ignoble art of coquetry. These mountain belles have looked forward to this conjuncture of time and place, for months, through the charming medium of hope. Here their fortune in life, they trusted, was to be made. The trapper appears to the Indian maiden, when compared to the braves of her own people, a being of a

superior order. To become his wife is the heaven of her ambition. All the charms of nature and savage art are accordingly brought into play, at this time, to secure the realization of her long-cherished dream. She dances in front of the camp-fire where the trapper sits, she smiles, dons pretty looks, and glides fleetly under the green cotton-wood trees, casting from time to time coy loving glances at the elected idol of her maidenly worship. Sometimes the impatient primitive maid, to test the effect of her graces, and to settle the question of conquest,—a question intensely interesting to every female heart,—adopts an expedient, which is however by no means confined to mountain courtship, and which satisfactorily shows that the philosophy of the heart in some of its branches is studied to as much advantage upon the woodless ranges of the Rocky mountains, as it is in fashionable city saloons. Let her but kindle the fire of jealousy, and her work is done. The blaze that follows will invariably reveal, when it exists, the delicate secret lodged in the depths of the masculine heart. She approaches, in her aboriginal minuet, some discarded lover of her tribe, who may be leaning like a statue of despair, against a tree within the circle of the encampment. The smile she gives him is like morning to his soul. The red marble is changed into life, and blithely seizes her offered hand for the fandango. Soon however is he made to repent of his presumption, by some cruel humiliation. The trapper, it may be, springs to his feet, strides across the emerald floor, and with a sledge-hammer blow brings his rival to the attitude, if not the feelings, of an oriental worshipper. He may deign, perhaps, the synchronal remark, "Quit you darned Injun, you can't shine in this crowd." The heart of the mountain maiden glows at the success of her stratagem. She "has caught her Anthony in her strong toil of grace."

Many of the trappers marry Indian women. And as they always rank with the highest of the native chiefs, public sentiment on the mountains confirms to them the prerogative of those chiefs of having a plurality of wives:—a prerogative, from the exercise of which they are seldom debarred by any religious scruples with regard to the subject of polygamy.

In the sketch we have drawn here of the trapper's life, those, who are to any degree conversant with the facts, will see, that, if it prove variant in any thing from the reality, this variance has resulted from the fault of softening too much the features of the picture. The grossness and corruption of that life, in its savage debasement, should perhaps have been presented in stronger relief, to satisfy the severe eye of truth. It makes us

smile then, in face of the music here, to think of Rousseau's doctrines of primordial purity, and the spontaneous grace of human development, in the normal school of nature. The sentimental radicalism of this scheme, ever shifting, with the facility of a French battalion, its form and position, is still protruding itself both in Europe and America, through and above the surface of the steady conservative progression of our own age. The abnegation of central constitutional evil in human nature ever lies at the root of the scheme, under the various flowerings of its manifold species. It will be alleged, we presume, that the trapper's life affords no fair ground for an argument here, because, for what we know, he may at the first have been a worthless renegade from society;—and that we might with like propriety reason upon the inadequacy of a popular government to the fulfilment of its ends, by adducing facts in our generalization altogether drawn from a community of Sydney convicts. In answer we remark, that many of the trappers are by no means distinguished for immorality when they first enter the American wilds. There are hundreds from New England and from Canada there, who before they left the settlements compared favorably in point of moral character with the great body of the population around them. The experiment has been fairly tried in their case. The mind, as instructed by honest ratiocination, must ascribe then the huge growth of depravity which has since deformed this good character to a sufficient cause,—to an interior hot-bed of evil, removed from the checks found in the family and church. For if evil was but incidental to man's nature, if its force and pressure were wholly received from his external relations, then would the sacred influences of nature at work upon the trapper in his complete isolation from his race, for months at a time,—the magnificent solitudes to whose grand tranquil preaching he daily listens, gradually abate the power of those sinful habits, he had contracted through intercourse with society in his earlier life. This must indeed be the tendency of the scheme, if the strength of those habits was not 'renewed like the eagle's' through the force and operation of an inward constitutional law. With the trapper before us, this project of natural innocence sounds like a lunatic's dream, fitted, according to one's mood, either to awaken mournful regrets, or to excite the scornful smile of incredulity.

But is there no intrinsic instructive and sanctifying power in the majesty of nature? May we not find under any conditions a reformatory institute in the illimitable plains of the West? To him who has walked by faith through the garden of Eden,

the great prairie becomes in truth *the garden of God*. It discloses not, like the paradise of an eastern prince, an artistic profusion of foliage, flower, and fruit, to the astonished sight: but a sublimity and joy grow slowly upon the mind, when contemplating its vast undulating stretches. We stand in the midst of the garden, and its surrounding wall is the strong blue horizon, reaching high to heaven. The green slopes and smiling flowers in the mighty plain, or its animate inhabitants, objects simply of the curious senses, are all merged in the glowing sights and swelling sounds which address themselves to the yearning soul. Or rather these, which make the cardinal objects of contemplation in a common landscape, find here like orchestral performers their just province, in preparing the soul for more exalted topics. We see in the still and glowing evening, far in the distance, endless parallels of waving green, looming with shifting hues in solemn measured succession across the horizon, whilst mystic swells from time to time fall upon the attentive ear, like reverberations from the spirit world. It is "the voice of the Lord God walking in the garden in the cool of the day." We are alone, and *Jehovah* is approaching! There are no trees of the garden now,—no church, no ministry or sacraments, typical and mediatory—among which we may hide ourselves from the divine presence. We are brought into direct unity with God on the open prairie. Now does the soul begin to interpret that summons of startling import which comes over the plain, "Man where art thou?"

Again, the prairie to the student is *the poem of God*. The daring fancy and art of man have not yet checkered it with interpolations. It appears still in its grand primitive characters. It is a majestic epic; and those solitary sylvan islets, far to the South and to the West, are but charming interludes, intended to relieve the mind amid the solemn grandeur of the narrative. We almost feel, as we think of the cities that shall hereafter deck the vast plain, of the trim country houses with their rectilinear orchards, and checkered-boards of fenced grain fields, that the utilitarian who may first sink a spade here, to break the charm inherent in the visioned grandeur of the place, should suffer the penalty which he would endure whoever might add to or take from the written book of God.

The prairie, to the christian, becomes *the mirror of God*. His unchangeable character is reflected in its changeless surface. Here the great I AM has registered his image. Here the ages return upon themselves. The earth still presents that fascinating maidenly smile, which on the creation day drew forth the



divine approbation, and made the Sons of God to shout for joy. That smile, radiant upon the face of this Eden, still kindles and glows with vestal consecration for heaven alone. It brightens not to enchant the heart of man. Its great heavenward intent, like the mysterious expression of Raphael's madonnas, produces sympathetically a profound longing in the soul after the Divine Good—a longing which is the *natural* germ of spiritual greatness in man.

We stand here in the primeval realm of time. It is another morning of the world. We look down wistfully upon the problematical future;—we look down upon eras of history, of civilization, of grace. We divine the influences of this virgin nature upon the future man;—its relations to religion, industry, and art. Shall the law of its being, the genius of the realm, the spirit of all true grandeur,—shall Simplicity establish its pure triumphs in the future civilized life of the Plains? Shall Truth and Liberty, in chaster forms than are yet known to the world, dwell here? Or shall the ghosts of Tradition flock to the first constituent assemblies of that life? Shall Prescription unfold here its antique embroidered models, that the constitutional law of civil and religious life may be blindly framed thereby? Or yet, as some events would prefigure, shall schemes of spiritual and social folly,—the nauseous spittle of healthful conservative life—by a squatter like tenure of this imperial grant of heaven, mock here the thoughtful mind of humanity for generations to come with the illusive phantoms of hope?

But we are told perhaps that we stand upon the grave of an ancient civilization: that the trapper's hunting ground is the cemetery of a departed world. Here then "are the graves which appear not, and the men that walk over them are not aware of them." The civilized life accordingly we would trace in the future is but a resurrection from the dead. Alpheus sinking in desolate sands reappears again beyond the Sicilian Sea, in the beautiful fountain of Arethusa. Under this aspect, the prairie becomes a sublime mystery. It is the confidant of God;—the sharer of a profound providential secret. In its calm majestic expression, it baffles the inquisitive researches of the antiquarian, and the few casual hints it imparts of a refined antiquity serve to bewilder the philosophic mind, much as the hieroglyphics of an obelisk bewilder the reason of a ploughman. Just to think, how unlike this ancient American civilization to that of Egypt or Asia or Greece, in its relations to the great progressive life of humanity. The temples of Thebes, the Parthenon and the palaces of the blue-robed Assyrian, have cast upon the mighty



world stream ineffaceable images, glowing with lessons of beauty and truth for the perusal of the latest generations. But here flourished an isolated civilization; which sustained about the same relation to the historical progression of the world, that the christian kingdom of Prester John did to the historical progression of the church; that is to say no relation at all. Oh for one to approach us from the immeasurable ruins who could say, "I only am escaped alone to tell thee."

Not unfrequently some quiet farmer upon Election day, incited by company and drink, undertakes in loud and confident tones to settle questions of high national import, which for years may have perplexed great statesmen. He feels like a political prophet, for the time, among his neighbors. But after the lapse of a day, and the natural subsidence of his excitement he shuns, with a sentiment of shame, the faces which surrounded him at the Polls, and attempts, by diligently resuming the sober work of the cornfield, to dispel the confusion and tawny blushes painfully started by reflection. Having glanced, in a cooler frame of mind, at the excursion just made in respect to the suggestive tendencies of the prairie, we hasten back, with a feeling not altogether dissimilar to the farmer's, to resume the more legitimate details of our subject.

The Anglo-American trapper is less swayed by feelings of SUPERSTITION than his Canadian comrade, much less than his aboriginal neighbor. Superstition, always conceived under the auspices of spiritual ignorance, is the legitimate offspring of fear and guilt. Its power however is greatly dependent upon constitutional and national peculiarities of character. The Indian mind is a pensioner upon the government of the imagination. To this faculty is the American Savage indebted for the doctrines of his religion, the objects of his faith, and the heaven of his hopes. This is the elect organ, by means of which the superstition of his nature organizes its system of prodigies. Through this organ it seizes the elements of sublimity and terror inspired by the sombre forms of nature, and combining them with vague remembrances of ancient traditions, and gloomy innate ideas, frames a creed around which the dark moral sentiments of the captive mind stand as a perpetual life guard. But the trapper on his part appears with stronger practical powers of mind, attended with blunted moral instincts. He is at a loss to comprehend at first the despotic empire of omens and prognostics among the warrior tribes. Time and intercourse however—the great agents of assimilation—produce their habitual results upon his simple mind, until forgetting his earlier intellectual convictions,

he unconsciously glides within the magic realm of the Indian superstition. He now resembles those ancient colonists, who, after the expatriation of the ten tribes of Israel, were brought by the king of Assyria to repopulate Samaria;—who “feared the Lord and served their own Gods.” Perhaps the only feature in which Cooper’s delineation of the *trapper* in ‘The Prairie’ expresses the full truth of life, is that of his mongrel faith. In almost every other view the picture is transcendental. It presents the trapper in a state of transfiguration. As well might we take Tasso’s radiant Rinaldo for a sober type of the French and Norman knighthood that actually fought with Godfrey at the storming of Jerusalem, as take the sentimental Natty Bumppo for a true key to the trapper’s character. But in the grave religious perplexity of the venerable hunter, in his devout respect for the Indian faith, wherein his dearest human friends had lived and died, and, chiefly, in the shadowy belief hesitatingly expressed in reference to the amazing paradox of a plurality of heavens, we are presented with a striking paradigm of the trapper’s hybrid theology. When he walks in front of the “medicine lodge,” the trapper renders mental homage to the mystery of the spot; he acknowledges the potency of those mnemonic incantations, by means of which the exercise of some dreaded divine prerogative is invoked. With a measured faith, he contemplates the immolation of hunting steeds upon the grave of the Chief, and traces through the intent of this modern hecatomb a practical providence, which admirably quadrates with the sensual complexion of his religious aptitude. He lends a credulous ear to the rehearsal of the Pueblo brave, who in the gloomy mountains of New Mexico has looked upon the solitary cave, in which a patient priesthood has for centuries kept vigils beside the undying fire: and where it is waiting to this day for the second advent of Quetzalcoatl—the god of the air,—who, according to traditional prophecy, shall come from the rising sun over the Gulf of Mexico, in his barge of rattlesnake skins, to establish another golden age. He frequents the thermal and mineral springs of the mountains, and propitiates with whimsical rites the fanciful divinities that dwell in the waters. In Ruxton’s “Life in the far West,” a glaring instance of superstition of the last kind is told, which we feel disposed to copy here. “He (Old Rube) had sought the springs for the purpose of invoking the fountain spirits, which, a perfect Indian in his simple heart, he implicitly believed to inhabit their mysterious waters. When the others had, as he thought, fallen asleep, La Bonté observed the ill-starved trapper take from his pouch a curiously carved red stone pipe,

which he carefully charged with tobacco and kinnik-kinnik. Then approaching the spring, he walked three times round it, and gravely sat himself down. Striking fire with his flint and steel, he lit his pipe, and bending the stem three several times toward the water, he inhaled a vast quantity of smoke, and bending back his neck and looking up, puffed it into the air. He then blew another puff towards the four points of the compass, and emptying the pipe into his hand, cast the consecrated contents into the spring, saying a few Indian 'medicine' words of cabalistic import. Having performed the ceremony to his satisfaction, he returned to the fire, conscious of having done a most important duty."

We have no wish, in these observations, to conceal from view the trapper's deserts. In addition to the direct contribution his pursuits have given toward the refinement of the age, we are free to confess that these pursuits have served incidentally to confer signal benefits upon the country. The trapper is the precursor and herald of a mightier power behind. Every shot from his rifle sounds the way, amid unknown magnificent realms, for the industrial march of civilization, as it comes with the axe and plough in the distance. Let his valuable public services, so far as they go, be set off against his crimes. The nation is deeply in debt to the trapper; as any one who will take pains to investigate the history of the different expeditions sent out by the government, from time to time, for the exploration of the great West, must soon discover. This merited concession however does not affect the general view we have given of the trapper's character. The degeneracy of this character proceeds necessarily from his mode of life, which is as incompatible with health of morals, as the exhalation from a western marsh with health of body.

At the close of every season, many of these hardy men fail to return from their hunting expeditions. They have met death amidst the awful solitudes of nature, by the hand of the Indian, or by disease. The absence of one or another from the annual Rendezvous may excite, upon that occasion, among the roistering survivors, some careless inquiry respecting his fate, to which the equally careless reply,—“he's rubbed out may be,” or “he's gone under,” is perhaps given by some old comrade.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> The following graphic periods setting off some characteristics and recording the untimely fate of Williams and Smith two worthies of mountain celebrity, we copy from a private letter just received from a highly respected merchant of Independence, Missouri:

When, in time, Industry shall have filled with agricultural wealth the valleys of the Rocky mountains, when Art shall have crowned with ornate villages those sweet shadowy haunts, where wanton trapper bands still chant savage love-songs by moonlight with Indian maids amidst the turbulent fandango, and when Religion and Civilization shall have established generally their abode throughout the plains of the West, in vain shall the antiquary look for memorials of the deeds or misdeeds of these barbarous pioneers. Their actions make no durable impression upon the earth. And perchance some mountain creek or solitary ridge, where a trapper has fallen by the treachery of the natives, will transmit to posterity through its name christened after the tragedy, all that is left to perpetuate the memory of this unique class of men.

*Sewickley, Pa.*

D. E. N.

"Our town was once the rendezvous for the mountain men, and when we first moved here, a motley crowd I assure you were at times assembled in the place. Smaller towns a few miles west of us and more on the frontier have now become their favorite resorts. Nearly all who were once actively engaged in the trade have abandoned the trapper's life and embarked in other pursuits. Those who are left are not as their progenitors were. Old Bill Williams and Pegg'd leg Smith (alias one wooden leg) were known far and near. Williams was inoffensive, an easy good natured man, whose great delight was to deal in the marvellous and entrance the gaping multitudes with narratives of events, that did and did not take place. Smith was the boisterous, troublesome companion, especially when two or three sheets in the wind. It was customary with him to mount his horse, gallop around the square, chase all the boys in his way, and ride into the dram shop, drink off a glass of liquor and then toss the glass at the bar keeper's head. His last achievement in our town was to shoot off the lock from the tavern stable, release his horse held in custody for his bills, and then ride triumphantly off through the streets away to the plains. Poor fellows! they are now gone to their last resting place. Like the moth, they led a dazzling life which carried them away to certain destruction. Williams, who was known familiarly to nearly all the Indian tribes, and loved by all, was at last killed by his once best friends, the Ectaw Indians, near to Santa Fe in 1849. Smith perished a year or so before in the mountains, near the head waters of the Big Platte river. Many of like occupation figured somewhat, but not so conspicuously as did these two men. Such were all the Sublette family (four brothers), the Bents (three brothers), and Fitzpatrick, now Indian agent for all the wild tribes. This last, Fitzpatrick, has now become an important personage, and one well esteemed by our government."

## REVERENCE AND RELIGION.

THE fear of the Lord is two fold. It may exist as a mere dread of his power and vindictive justice. As such it possesses no value, and only serves to degrade the subject of it to the level of the animal, that can also shrink at the approach of danger. But when it is coupled with intelligence and purity of feeling, it assumes an entirely different character. It then becomes *reverence*, which is said by Solomon to be "the beginning of wisdom," or religion in the soul. It shall be the object of this paper to show its fundamental character in the development of the christian life.

Reverence is one of those noble and exalted feelings, that distinguishes man from the brute creation, and is co-ordinate with reason and the gift of speech. As irrational creatures cannot reason or speak, so they do not possess reverence. God, who is above all, and over all blessed forevermore, is the proper and legitimate object for which this feeling is to be exercised. If he did not exist, or if he were not what he is, there could be no feeling of this kind at all. The world should be without form and void, a dreary waste, with nothing for intelligent beings to admire and adore. The light of the universe should have gone out in midnight darkness, and men and angels, supposing they could exist apart from God, should have been given over to eternal horror, to blackness of darkness forevermore. But the glory of the universe is the Supreme Being, whose presence spreads joy and happiness throughout his dominions, and calls forth the admiration of all, who can contemplate his adorable perfections.

The fear of the Lord implies in the first place reverence for the name, or character of God, wherever it is made known. The heavens declare the glory of God, and the firmament sheweth his handy work. Day unto day uttereth speech and night unto night sheweth knowledge. In the works of creation, from the twinkling star far away in distant space, to the tender blade of grass beneath our feet, the power, wisdom, and goodness of God are plainly set forth. Evidently these things must have come from his creative hand, and when devoutly and piously contemplated, they lead the mind up to the Creator, the great Architect of all, and fill it with admiration and reverence. In the various events of history, that transpire among men, the same wisdom, power, and goodness may be seen as in the natural world, whilst at the same time other attributes of his char-

acter come more fully into view. Justice and Mercy are clearly seen in his dealings with nations and individuals, for whilst the wicked and the proud are overthrown as in a moment, at other times, they are spared and preserved. At one time, the blasphemer is suddenly cut off in his sins, at another time he is permitted to stand at least for a season. All this enables the serious mind to venerate the Being, who can thus rule over all, and temper his justice with mercy. There is a way of looking at nature and history, that excites no love for God, or regard for his name. Men for instance admire the world, the order and beauty of its parts, without referring them to God as their author, or the mirror of his presence. This is a mere sensual gratification and it can beget no reverence. Carlyle, who with a masterly hand has laid bare the weakness of the French infidels and makes it to consist in their want of reverence, expresses himself in his peculiar style in reference to Diderot, in the following language: "The unhappy man sailed through the universe of Worlds, and found no maker thereof; had descended to the abysses where Being no longer casts its shadow, and felt only the rain-drops trickle down; and seen only the rainbow of Creation, which originated from no sun; and heard only the everlasting storm, which no one governs; and looked upwards for the Divine Eye, and beheld only the black, bottomless, glaring Death's Eye-Socket; such with all his voyagings was the philosophic fortune he had realized."

It is, however, only in the revelation which God has made in the person of his Son, our Saviour, that his character comes fully to light. What is only dimly suggested in nature, is here revealed in the broad light of day. Here God is seen, as the Author and Creator of all things, the Judge and Ruler of the universe, and the merciful Father of all his children. His power and wisdom appear in their full extent; his justice infinitely strict and flexible, whilst his mercy is exhibited on a much larger scale than elsewhere. Here it is something more than mere patience with the sinner's folly, or long-suffering with the evil-doer. It extends to him abundant pardon, and with it, eternal life; something that nature could never have taught him. With such an exhibition of God, the intelligent mind, must fall down in admiration and praise, so soon as it catches a glimpse of his presence. That Being who possesses such a character, must become sacred in our eyes; his ways, his laws, his words, we must venerate, and violence done in any way to his name, inflicts upon us pain and sorrow. The saints of old present us with some remarkable exemplifications of such a feeling, when

God was pleased to reveal himself to them in some extraordinary manner. The patriarch Jacob in his dream saw heaven opened, and the angels of God ascending and descending. When he awaked out of his sleep, he exclaimed, Surely the Lord is in this place and I knew it not. It is said that he was afraid,—that is, filled with reverence and awe, and said, How dreadful is this place! this is none other but the house of God, and this is the gate of heaven. The prophet Isaiah in holy vision saw the Lord sitting upon a throne and lifted up, and his train filled the temple, and above it stood the Seraphim, and one cried to another, and said, Holy, holy, holy is the Lord of hosts, the whole earth is full of his glory. Then the prophet in the profoundest reverence says, Wo is me, for I am undone, because I am a man of unclean lips; for mine eyes have seen the King, the Lord of hosts. The Psalmist asks, who shall ascend into the hill of the Lord, and who shall stand in his holy place, as if a sacred awe checked his approach into the presence of God. John in the Revelation, says that he fell at the feet of Christ as a dead man. His reverence for his Lord and master, completely overcame his physical and mortal constitutions.

In the next place the fear of the Lord implies reverence for his Church, which becomes something sacred from its connection with Christ, who is in it, rules over it, and directs it from age to age down to the latest period of time. As a mere collection of good and pious men, the Church can claim the respect and consideration of all. But it possesses a divine, as well as a human side. It is the Kingdom of heaven, which has been set up in the world, and calls for and demands the allegiance of all men. Christ and his Church are one, as the Father and the Son are one. In the day of judgement he will speak to the wicked in this wise: *I was a hungered, and ye gave me no meat; I was thirsty and ye gave me no drink; I was a stranger, and ye took me not in.* Then the wicked who never believed that Christ was in his church and never saw him there, will say, when saw we Thee an hungered, or a thirst, or a stranger, or naked, or sick, and in prison, and did not minister unto thee. Christ will reply to them by saying, verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye did it not unto the least of these, ye did it not unto me. In another place, he says, he that receiveth you, receiveth me. In these passages, and others like them, Christ evidently identifies himself with his people, and rightly too, for he and they are one. Reverence paid to the church, is reverence paid to Christ, and not to man. We call no man master, but as Christ is in his church, we look up to her with



filial reverence and regard; we place ourselves under her instruction and care; we look to her for comfort in distress, and instruction to guide our wandering feet aright, and submit ourselves to her wholesome discipline or reproof when we err, and regard it as coming from Christ himself.

A proper regard for the church necessarily begets reverence for everything connected with her. We reverence the ground upon which the outward building stands, and when we enter the sanctuary, we feel the presence of Him, who has there recorded his name. It is a beautiful custom handed down from former times, but now disappearing, for persons when they enter the church to pause in their pews, and with uncovered heads to offer up a silent prayer to God. This shows a proper feeling, and contrasts strongly with the irreverence, and irreligious spirit and air, that are so often witnessed in the sanctuary in our days. Ministers, the servants of the sanctuary, and stewards of the mystery of grace, have always been held in high esteem for their work's sake, except where a skeptical and profane spirit has lifted up its head in the community, and regard for religion itself has disappeared. It is, however, more especially in reference to the means of grace, that our reverence for the Church and Christ, is manifested. The Bible becomes to us the *Holy Bible*, and appears to us as a treasure above all price. It is our daily companion, a lamp to our feet, and a light to our ways. In the hour of affliction, its pages become resplendent with heavenly light, and in prosperity it is the ornament of all our joys. When we open its pages, a sacred awe checks our minds, and we fear to criticise, or doubt its contents. No man can read the scripture to any purpose, who has not learned to regard them with a kind of sacred awe. The sacraments have always excited reverential feelings in the hearts of devout worshippers. Men cannot divest themselves entirely of such feelings when they are administered in their presence, however much they are made to recede in the services of the sanctuary. They may deny that Christ is present on such occasions, and in their opposition to mystery, reduce them to empty ceremonies, still their own feelings, if they be not entirely dead to divine things, are the strongest proof that Christ is there in his power and his glory. The services of the sanctuary impart a sacredness to the day itself on which they are held, and hence we keep the sabbath day holy. Sabbath profanation is a sin, not because a day is disregarded; but because it is a practical disregard for that for which the sabbath is kept. Sabbath breakers, therefore, in this country, where the sabbath is so intimately bound up with our religious services,



must be placed among those, who have not the fear of God in their hearts and no regard for the work of salvation, which it commemorates. There are other holy days that have been observed with reverential from an early period in the history of the church. They commemorate the leading facts in the Saviour's life, as they are presented to us in the creed. Love for Christ and faith in his work as consisting of different parts, such as his incarnation, his death, his resurrection and his exaltation to the right hand of the majesty in heaven, naturally lead to the observance of such days. Though neglected in this country, we may predict their return, so soon as the faith of the church is again reduced to the order in which it stands in the Apostles' Creed.

Next to the church as a divine institution in the world, parents, rulers, and all placed in authority, are objects that should be revered. All valid human authority comes from the Lord, and is on this account binding upon men. In a certain sense it is the authority of God, or at least an adumbration of that authority. The former prepares the mind as a preparatory discipline for the adoption of the latter. At first all the fear which the child can exercise towards God, is that which it exercises towards its parents; it has as yet no idea of God and his law, and can show reverence to none but its parents. This, however, is accepted of God, as shown towards himself. As years, however, pass away, and the mind expands, reverence towards God, the Father of all is developed. It has been prepared already to fear God; the habit of its mind has been to submit and obey, and it is now ready to pass from the service of its parents to the service of God. Hence that well established fact, that early religious instruction, at home by the fire-side, is so generally employed by Providence in raising up distinguished lights of the church, and of the age. Without such a previous training it is hard indeed for individuals to submit themselves to the authority of God in after years. They have not learned the lesson of fear in youth, and the older they become, the harder the task. The discipline of the state is similar to that of the parental, and deserve similar respect or regard. The man that professes superior piety, and regard for God, or "a higher law," and yet despises the laws of the land, miserably deceives and contradicts himself. His disregard for human tribunals measures his disregard for that which is divine. His higher law emanates from no deity, that lives and manifests himself in the history of the world, but from that airy substance, styled self, that has usurped the throne of his will.

We now contend that reverence as thus described, is the beginning of all wisdom, the starting point of all piety, or religion in the soul. When this is said, we are not to understand, that religion has its origin in the feeling of reverence. If this were so, it would be merely a human production, a plant that grows spontaneously from the soil of the human heart. But this were an impossibility. Men never become religious when left to their own spontaneous development. On the contrary their course is constantly downwards. Religion is something *back* of all that men can say, or do, or think, or feel. It comes to us as a pure gift from Jesus Christ, as a fountain of life and immortality to a world dead in trespasses and sins. Apart from Christ there is no hope for the world, as it is invincibly bound to the law of sin and death. But when this is said, it may nevertheless be affirmed, that reverence is something fundamental to all other religious affections, and underlies the whole frame-work of the christian life; it is a foundation-stone of all true christian activity, a prop or support, without which the whole structure must collapse and fall to the ground. In the history of redemption, in its progress from the lowest to the highest development, the fear of the Lord was first awakened, and was made to precede the love of God, and then to serve as the permanent basis of this latter. It was mainly the object of the Jewish dispensation to infuse into the constitution of the world, this divine, or heavenly fear. All the revelations, therefore, that were made to the Jewish church, were calculated to excite reverence rather than love. Its miracles, for instance those performed in Egypt, differed essentially from those of the Saviour. The former were destructive and terrific in their character, whilst the latter, were so many expressions of the divine benignity and love, designed to heal the bodies or the souls of men. The nearest approach in the christian to the Jewish miracle, is found in the fig-tree, that was made to wither on account of its barrenness. The old dispensation passed away, but was not destroyed. That reverence which it had served to engender remained, and formed the ground-work upon which the dispensation of love was to be reared. Fear became mature, and turned to love, and these became so united as to form only different sides of the same thing. The development of the individual christian life, is similar to that of the church as a whole. First the law, then the gospel; first fear, then love. This can be made to appear.

The godhead comes to man with the gift of salvation and eternal life. The Father draws the sinner to the Son through the Holy Ghost. The gift of all gifts is placed before him, and

he is invited to accept of it without money and without price. To become his he must receive and accept of it by faith. Now the first activity which the soul puts forth in receiving Christ, is reverence, or the fear of the Lord. This becomes active before love, or faith, or hope, and prepares the way for their existence. Before men can believe in God, hope in him, or love him, they must learn to fear him. He must gain the homage of their hearts, and the adoration of their tongues. Slavish fear drives the soul farther and farther away from God; a filial fear, however, draws it towards him. It comes trembling and afraid, into the presence of God, and yet drawn by a power, which it cannot resist, it comes and bows before him. So it is with the little child. Conscious of its faults, it comes tremblingly towards its parents, and yet because its parents, are to it the most lovely of all persons, it runs to their embrace. Religion consists much more in the fact that we are in constant communication with the life of the Redeemer, than in any efforts, or exertions, which we can make ourselves. To stand within the channel of such a communication of divine life, is to be in a state of grace. Reverence enables the soul to occupy such a relation with reference to Christ. It may be considered as the tendril of the soul, that reaches out to God for support, as the tendril of the vine, seeks the branch of some neighboring tree. It thus makes faith possible, which can be exercised only as the soul comes in contact with spiritual realities, and is itself the firm grasp which the soul is enabled to take of Christ. There are divinely appointed means, through which God imparts his blessings to men. Reverence brings the soul in contact with these; it leads the soul to the church, to the sacraments, to the house of prayer, to the word of God. Men never come to Christ, who despise the sanctuary, or regard the word of God lightly. How much does respect for the good and the pious in a community accomplish! The secret of the influence, which they exert, consists altogether in the reverence which they inspire by their life and example. We may lay it down as a rule, that as long as an individual can appreciate the value of good men, that this condition is a hopeful one, whereas there seems to be little hope for individuals or families, where the christian life ceases to be admired, or where some good man, or sound author is not revered as a sort of patron saint.

Further, reverence is something fundamental in the christian life, because it is a necessary support or basis to every christian grace. We have said that it preceded other gracious feelings and activities; we now say that it controls, and modifies them throughout.

Knowledge, christian knowledge leans upon reverence for support. Without such a ballast, it inflates its possessor, runs wild, and carries the soul into endless confusion and solitary wastes. The history of the church teaches us this melancholy lesson on every page of its past history. Men have approached the scripture with irreverent hands and sought to support by its authority, their own doctrines and speculations. They have tried to correct its teachings, turned its awful verities into mere fables, and professed themselves wise above that which is written. This has resulted altogether from the profane temper of their own minds, or from the spirit of their age, that could not separate the sacred from what is profane, and hence endeavored to mingle in horrid confusion heaven and hell, good and evil, life and death. If, however, the mind be reverential, it approaches the scripture with the conviction, that it contains, the mystery of mysteries. Ah! he touches the scripture with sacrilegious hands, who has not already learned to sit at the Saviour's feet, and meekly to receive his heavenly instructions. Religion is not inimical to the highest flights of the intellect; it lays no embargo on its adventurous voyages; it rejoices in the riches with which it comes freighted into the harbor. Man must speculate, if he is to remain man, and religion has given him the best impulse in that direction; it seeks to direct his flights; it points out the quick-sands, and whirl-pools, that endanger its course. In our days when the human mind has been so signally emancipated, when it disdains any longer to be confined to creeks and bays, and boldly pushes its way out into the ocean in quest of new discoveries; when it sets at defiance old and venerated theories, and in the glare of its own light forgets, that men have lived, and thought and reflected in other days, there is certainly reason for fear, lest in the love of adventure, a proper regard for the everlasting land-marks of Truth itself may be sacrificed. Upon the domain of religion, are observed full as many adventurers, and fortune-seekers as elsewhere, who have never learned to bow at the shrine of Truth, and hence strive to make it subservient to temporal ends and purposes. What is necessary to save the world of religious thought, is a return to the spirit of reverence, which will prompt men to adore and praise the majesty of the divine revelations, when and whenever made, and in our efforts to outrun degrading superstition, we must take heed lest we aim to be gods ourselves, knowing good and evil.

As reverence is a support to our intellectual development, so it is in regard to the purely moral part of our constitutions.

Without it, love or charity cannot be complete, nor indeed exist at all. Without the fear of God, the love of God, turns to improper familiarity with Him, and divine things, and men address Him very much as their equal, or companion. Such we find to be the case with all those kinds of piety, that are lacking in that element, which leads men to experience awe. Reverence must enter as an essential ingredient into all true piety, that men may be brought to occupy their proper position before the majesty of Heaven. It makes them feel their inferiority in the sight of God and gives place to humility, and all true and acceptable worship. It looks upon God, as the rightful Lord and master, and leads to holy obedience. Love and fear co-mingling in the soul, enable it to look upon the law of God, as something too sacred to be violated, and at the same time, a way of pleasantness, and a path of peace. It pierces the tenderest feeling of the pious heart, when men around set the divine authority at defiance; how much more must it start back with fear when it is made itself the occasion of marring and defacing all that is most lovely in the universe?

All moral progress presupposes some adaptedness of the soul, some remaining stamina of strength, as a commencing-point from which the building is to be carried forward. Such we have shown the fear of God to be. Without it man is a reprobate and not susceptible of receiving any healthful influence from above or beneath. We do not expect to raise a crop of grain from the mountain-rock, or the arid sand of the desert. So we do not look for the restoration of the lost spirits, in whom no longer a divine susceptibility is to be found. With man, however, who is yet in a transition-state, and who has not sunk so low, there is still hope, and that is to be found in his capacity of reverencing that which is above him and infinitely worthy of his regard.

From what has now been said, we are enabled to see the importance of the feeling of reverence, and at the same time the evil of a want of it. Irreverence is truly a fatal or mortal sin. Generally it is not thought so. For the most part it is regarded as a sin of small account, as compared with other sins. It seems to injure no person; it takes no person's property; it defames no person's character, and no immediate evil seems to result from it. Thus profane swearing in this country is regarded as the most venial of all transgressions, a mere peccadillo, that ought to be overlooked. But if what has been said is true, this view of things is an entirely false one. Irreverence and profanity of every kind strike at the very vitals of our moral

constitutions, and render the difficulty of our ever arising to a religious life so much the greater. In the body there are certain parts, that are more tender and sensitive than others; when these are wounded, the danger is always the more imminent. In our moral constitutions, reverence is such a vital part. When that is entirely defaced, the last rays of spiritual light have become extinct. According to scripture, the culmination of all sin, is found in the blasphemy against the Holy Ghost, which it is said cannot be forgiven in this world nor in the world to come. Now nothing is more evident, than that this consists essentially in *gross irreverence*. The language as well as the connection implies this. The commission of this sin, requires the banishment of all regard for God and his authority from the heart, and strips him forever from becoming the subject of renewing grace. If the destiny of such a one be regarded as a hard one, no imputation can be made against the Creator, for his condition is one into which he has brought himself, by breaking through every restraint, and by inflicting upon himself the wound, which no grace can heal.

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## THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE CHRISTIAN NAME.

*A practical exposition of Acts. ii : 26, "and the disciples were called christians first at Antioch."*

THE name of a thing is according to its original intention the expression of its essence, the making known of the thing itself. By means of sin, that great lie, it is true a contradiction has been introduced into the world, between the Inward and Outward, between Spirit and Flesh, also between Essence and Name. But this disharmony finds no place in the significance of things, as they proceeded from God ; much rather, the names of Holy writ, the Book of revealed Wisdom, are in the highest degree significant. This holds also with reference to the name of the Confessors of our Saviour, with which idea we have here to do. At first, things were known by various appellations, all of which had reference to a particular phase of their character, and the problems which they were to solve. They called themselves "*Disciples*," of Jesus Christ—their divine Teacher, whom they were to follow and to obey—or "*Holy*" because separated from the World and from sin, consecrated to the service of the Triune God, and called to unceasing efforts towards moral perfection—or "*Brethren*," because they constituted One Family of the Redeemed, One Soul, One Heart, One Body and were to become more and more One by means of Love, as they were One by Faith in the Lord.

The name "*Christian*" arose according to the text, first at Antioch, the capital of Syria, and the mother congregation of heathen missions, about the year 40 according to our time. It is not said, however, from whence it came. Certainly not from the Jews, because they called the hated followers of the crucified Jesus, whom they would not accept as Christ, that is, the promised and by themselves expected messiah, "*Nazareans*" or "*Galileans*." It is most probable that it came from the Gentiles, who saw in Christ not a title of office, but a proper name, with which they desired to denominate the believers, in the same way as we speak of *Caesareans*, *Lutherans*, *Zwinglians*, *Swedenborgians*, *Kantians*, &c. Notwithstanding this, the appellation was not accidental, but was by the guidance of divine Providence, without whose will not a hair can fall from our heads and at the same time no thought proceeds from the heart and not a word from the mouth of man. The heathens at Antioch, became in this case, without knowing or desiring it, prophets, similar to Balaam, and Caiaphas, with his remarkable



words:—"It is expedient for us that one man should die for the people, and that the whole nation perish not." They gave expression to a deep truth of which they themselves had no presentiment or knowledge. For the name christian is peculiarly expressive, and in the highest degree suitable, significant of that which every confessor of Christ should be in distinction from Heathen, Jew or Turk. For such reasons it soon became general among the faithful, and to this day is the appellation by which those baptized into Christ, and who receive salvation from him, are called.

It is therefore of great importance, for each one, to discover the *significance of the christian name*, which we all bear, no matter of what persuasion, and to learn the glorious privileges and sacred duties which it comprehends.

In general the name christian denotes a confessor, adherent and follower of Jesus Christ, such an one, in whom the life of our Lord is continued, and who is so to speak a second Christ, and always is to become more and more so, of course in a relative sense, and with constant dependence upon Him, the Prince of our Salvation, the Author and Finisher of our faith. We can reach the significance of the christian name in the best way if we proceed from the significance of the *Person and Work of Jesus Christ*. From this then as a consequence we shall have our *character* and our *mission*, or what we, as his confessors or his followers *are*, and what is before us, to be *accomplished and effected*.

§1. If we inquire first into the proper nature of the *Person* of Jesus Christ, we find it to consist in the inmost, pure and indissoluble *union of the divine and human natures*, in virtue of which he is the mediator and reconciler between God and man, the Author of our Redemption and our communion with the Godhead. In the Gospels he declares himself, with peculiar preference the "*Son of Man*," to show his condescension to us, his real communion and inward participation in every thing really human, yea, in our sufferings, in our weakness and wants. He possessed Body, Soul and Spirit as we do; was a babe at his mother's breast, an obedient child, youth and man, advanced in age, and grew in wisdom and favor with God and man. He hungered and thirsted, ate and drank, was awake and slept—was tried and tempted, as we are, but without, for a moment, giving way to temptation—suffered, died and was buried, in short, in every thing he was made like unto us, sin excepted, which guilt, as an innocent surety, as a voluntary representative he removed on the accursed tree. In spite of this condescen-



sion and form of a servant, we see in him, manifested the highest bloom and fruit of humanity—we see in him our race redeemed, ennobled, glorified, perfected. He is called "*Son of Man*" also in this sense, because he is the ideal, the complete *man*, the second divine Adam, the representative of the new creation—the whole regenerated humanity. On the other hand, he is as often called the "*Son of God*," particularly by the Apostles, and that in the most complete sense, as the only begotten of the Father, who was with the Father from the beginning, whose glory, full of grace and truth is reflected through the veil of his human nature. He is the Word, being from Eternity with God, yea according to his nature, was God himself; in whom dwells the fullness of the Godhead bodily; in fine he is God himself, revealed in the flesh for our temporal as well as eternal salvation. Here "where the divine and the human are united in one, where perfect fullness appears," is the great central mystery, the fundamental truth of christianity—here the depth, into which angels desire to look—here the inexhaustible source of reconciliation—of life—of salvation to the creature needing, as well as desiring Redemption.

What has now been affected in a perfect and complete sense in Jesus Christ, shall, as far as possible in a finite creature, be repeated in every christian. We are all in a relative sense children of God, unless we bear the holy name of our Saviour in vain, and we are to become more and more so. The Saviour took our human nature, to make us, as Peter says, "partakers of the divine nature." We are all sons of men, and shall always remain so. Christianity aims not at the destruction of our natural dispositions, but to redeem them from the power of sin, to sanctify and to place them upon that grade of perfection, so that the complete christian is at the same time a perfect man and vice versa. In order that this may have place, the impartation of a new life is necessary—and upon the basis of our natural birth, a regeneration proceeding from above, must be effected,—the old, wild trunk, which at best can produce but evil fruit, must be grafted by the divine husbandman with a pure graft, which gradually grows with the former, until it brings forth pure shoots, blossoms and fruit. That is, in order to have part in Christ and his means of salvation, we must become *Sons of God*, or, rather, as the Scriptures, to preserve the high dignity, the eternal and perfect Sonship of Christ, generally call the faithful, "*children of God*," yet without thereby ceasing to be children of men. He that has merely natural Sonship and is born from the will of the flesh, deserves not the title of christian;

only those who receive Christ, who really and truly believe in his name, and are born of God by the creative power of the Holy Ghost. This second birth is nothing more than the implanting of the divine, eternal life in us, as natural generation is the transferring of the natural life of the parents—the continuation of the same life in a new being. The begotten always partakes of the nature of him begetting—what is born of the flesh, is flesh, and what is born of the Spirit, is Spirit. We are to be made then through the agency of the Holy Ghost, in a particular sense, “partakers of the divine nature,” by which our sinful nature is cleansed, transformed and glorified, in a heaven-like manner,—the divine life of Christ is to flow over into us, that we may live, move and be in him, and by faith be one heart, one soul with him, and thus become living members of his body.

This is no exaggeration, but the scriptural representation of an important, precious truth, which offers to us poor, unworthy beings, the highest honor and the most exalted dignity, of which we are capable. We are, of course not to become one with Christ in the sense that we are to cease to be finite beings and self-conscious personalities, and to be swallowed up in him as the drops in the ocean; still, on the other hand, we are not to reverence him only as the divine Founder of our Holy Religion, agreeing with his doctrines and views, as the Jews with Moses, the Mahomedans with Mahomet. Much more does the New Testament represent, in innumerable passages, the relation of the Redeemed to the Redeemer as an actual and real *life union*. Our Saviour represents himself as the vine, his disciples the branches, who derive power and support from Him, and sundered from him, must cease to exist and wither and become irrecoverably lost. He is the eternal life, he that believeth in Him, hath everlasting life, he that believeth not the Son, hath not life. In the great judgment day, the Saviour will regard himself in such close, intimate union with his own, that he will regard their sufferings and wants while in the world, as his own, and will say, “Whatsoever ye did to the least of these my Brethren, ye did unto me.” We are challenged to eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink his blood, that is, to take up in us his life, if we are true disciples, and desire finally to have part in the Resurrection. We are called members of His Body, in whom also his life-blood circulates—and are penetrated by his life, and ruled by his Will—“Christ is my life,” says the Apostle, “I live, yet not I, but Christ lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh, I live by the faith of the Son of

God, who loved me, and gave himself for me." "When Christ, who is our Life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with Him in Glory." Paul, by using so frequently the expression "in Christ," does not thereby merely regard Him as Mediator, much less as Instrument, but as the life-element, in which the faithful stand,—have their entire spiritual existence, and in which all duty is to be performed.

What a glorious and magnificent calling is thus presented to us! Christ, the Son of God, and Son of man,—the Saviour of the World,—the Lord of Lords—is not ashamed to call us his friends and his Bretheren! And his beloved Apostle assures us that, "we shall be like Him, and shall see Him as he is!" Let us adore therefore, in humility and take shame to ourselves, that we have preserved and respected our christian name so little, and in so many instances have contradicted it in thought, word and deed.

Although every one is now called to such indescribable honor, yet he cannot, as a single individual attain to this, except in living communion with the Holy Catholic Church, as a Member of the Body of Christ. In the *Church*, we have the union of the divine and human with all its excellence, represented far more fully and clearly than in any single individual saint, however distinguished for piety. She, and not the individual soul, is called therefore the Lamb's Bride, whom the Bridegroom adorns with the most costly apparel, the Body of Jesus Christ, the fulness of Him that filleth all in all. We are now members of the Body, and must remain in organic union with it, if we are to be healthy, and thriving. Fundamentally, there is no difference between genuine godliness (*christlichkeit*) and churchliness, they are intimately related, as Christ and his Church, as Body and Soul. Where the two come into conflict, there must be at bottom a misconception, or a sickly state of piety. He that fancies he can either in separatistic pride, or monkish withdrawal from the world, separated from historical christianity, from the Church, founded and guided by the Holy Ghost, work out to better advantage, the salvation of his Soul, must suffer this error severely, depriving himself of innumerable blessings, and robbing himself of all power and strength. Even open imperfections and diseases, which often intrude into the church, without ability to destroy her existence or essence, afford no sufficient ground to separate from her, but are only a more powerful challenge for patience, prayer, effort and fidelity. Certainly deep love to Christ always brings with it love for his church, and he that understands the nature of humility and love, and anticipates

the truth of the mystery of the communion of saints, cannot otherwise, but look forward with reverence and free obedience to the great cloud of witnesses of the past,—to the invisible yet at the same time visible church, which the Lord of heaven and earth has chosen as his Bride. Alas! it is too true, that in reality, we have a false Churchliness at the expense of being Christ-like, and a false likeness to Christ, which intrudes into the place of Churchliness. The true and sound view is only in such a union of both, where one loves the Church, not as an abstraction, a phantasy, but as the actual, historical Church, founded and directed by Christ,—loved in him and for his sake; yea with that love with which he loved her, and bought her with his own precious blood; and where the united voice of christendom receives a voluntary audience, and an intelligent regard, and the general reason is elevated above the particular, the whole above the parts, and the body above its members.

If this be now the proper relation, it follows, that the individual christian is able to develop and perfect his christian character in a sound way only in that degree in which he lives in the communion of saints, and employs the means of Grace, which God has ordered in his Church, which are our daily spiritual food, and are to nourish and advance the new life commenced within, till he has grown to the statue of a perfect man in Christ Jesus. As no member, sundered from the Body, no branch separated from the tree, can thrive or grow, so on the other hand can no single individual come to perfection, before the whole Body has reached it. The perfection or completion of individual piety falls in with the upbuilding and triumph of the Church. "It does not yet appear, what we shall be." When the Lord shall come again, and the new Jerusalem in bridal apparel shall advance toward Him, then shall we also, as individual Jewels in the same attire reflect his glory, then shall "we be like Him,"—then shall the deep glorious significance of our christian name be first perfectly realized and understood.

§2. If we inquire now in the second place, into the office of Christ, to deduce the office and duties of the christian, we find it to consist in this, that he is in a perfect sense the *Prophet, Priest and King of Humanity*. Christ, or as the Hebrew expression has it, Messiah, means the *Anointed of God*, furnished with the Holy Ghost without measure. In the Old Testament the three servants of the Theocracy, Prophet, Priest and King, were anointed, and thereby were consecrated exclusively to the service of God, and qualified to fulfil their Holy Functions in the kingdom of God. These three Offices and Functions were

in the highest sense united in our Redeemer, and are to proceed from him, in a relative sense, upon all his disciples. For this purpose John speaks of the anointing, which we received from the Lord, and which remains with us. Also the Heidelberg Catechism answers so beautifully and appropriately, the 32nd question: "Why are you called a christian? Because I am a member of Christ by faith, and thus am partaker of his anointing, that so I may confess his name, and present myself a living sacrifice of thankfulness to him; and also with a free and good conscience I may fight against sin and satan in this life, and afterward reign with him eternally, over all creatures."

I. Christ is the highest *Prophet*, in that he has perfectly revealed to us the Truth and Will of God in his Words and his Miracles, so that we cannot expect a deeper explanation of divine things beyond Him. In the Old Testament, Moses and the Prophets spoke of him: he has however gathered together in himself all the scattered rays of revelation then preparing—and these enriched now shine forth from his divine-human Person. "No one has seen God at any time, the only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared him." He is the Light of the World, the Personal Truth, the Centre, the sun of all Truth, having reference to our eternal salvation, and in him are contained, as the apostle says, all the treasures of Wisdom and Knowledge.

Man was created in the image of God, also in Truth and for Truth. In him the hidden sense of nature comes to consciousness; he is the interpreter of its mysteries, the organ of its mute wonders; he elevates himself at the same time above nature, and soars, in virtue of his inherent God-consciousness and knowledge to the contemplation of the Creator and Preserver of all things. But this original light of Paradise has been obscured by means of the fall; he has sunk himself into the life of nature, and though here and there, in his condition, a few separated rays of this higher knowledge break through this night of sin, and he can never wholly deny his divine origin, still it is only as a weak twilight or a stellar glare in the deepest midnight. By means of his departure from the source of all Truth, he lost the true knowledge of himself, the world—and of God; and the divine image in him now lies in ruins. This Christ has first restored and brought to light perfectly in every point of view.

The regenerated individual, or the christian in the true sense of the word, is enlightened by the Holy Ghost, is surrounded by the Light of the Gospel in which he learns to know himself,—God in his Omnipotence, Eternity, Glory, Justice, Love and

Grace. Jesus Christ as the only ground of salvation, the Way, the Truth and the Life. In this knowledge he is to grow daily, always to penetrate deeper into the hidden meaning of God's word, to go from one degree of truth to another, until he comes to see face to face, as he is known by the Omniscient One. Still this is not enough. As a Prophet he dare not keep to himself the treasures of wisdom, which alone can make wise to everlasting salvation, but according to the example of Christ, he gives them to the world, he lets his light shine before men, and acknowledges his divine master in word and deed, before old and young, great and small, high and low. "He that confesses me before men, him will I confess before my Father who is in heaven; he that denies me before men, him will I also deny before my Father who is in heaven." This is spoken, not only to those that are called to be public teachers in a particular sense, but to all christians. As they are all taught of God, so also should all, each in his sphere and according to the grace and opportunity granted him by means of their testimony and example lead others, Children and Parents, Brethren and Sisters, Friends and Foes, to that source of Life and of Truth.

II. Christ is the true *Priest*, that is, the only Mediator between God and man, who having consecrated himself wholly to God and Humanity by means of his one sacrifice upon the Cross, has wrought out an everlasting salvation, and by his Intercession before the throne of our Father and his Father, and perpetually represents us, so that the shafts of his penal justice do not touch us, and on account of the will of his only begotten Son, he lifts upon us his reconciled countenance and accepts us as his children, and as heirs of eternal salvation.

In this we as christians are to become like unto our Saviour, and as it were continue his Priestly office. In a state of innocence, man was in an undeveloped sense a Priest, and stood in one view mediating between heaven and earth uttering not only his prayer of praise, but also so to speak, as the representative of nature, forming its life into a Psalm of thanksgiving and sacrificing on the altar of the Most High; to Whom the birds in the air, the fish in the sea, yea, even the worm upon the earth, through the mediation of human consciousness, render praise and prayer.

This priestly office of the first Adam, defaced by means of sin, has been restored far more gloriously in the second Adam and in him has been perfectly realized. True, we are no mediators in one sense of the term, and we cannot reconcile ourselves nor others to God. This position and honor belongs alone to

Christ. But he will use us as instruments, to introduce his forever accomplished work of Redemption into the consciousness of man, and to spread his blessings farther and farther. We are all called to be Priests in the sense, that as He did, so we are to consecrate ourselves unreservedly to Him, with all that we have and all that we are, as well as to the welfare of humanity. We have no right to life, and our earthly existence has no reasonable sense and end, except as we live for the glory of God, and for the good of his church. This is the highest ornament of humanity, and its true glory; every thing else appears trifling, and leads only to destruction. In the same measure in which we live for this exalted purpose have we a claim to that piety and morality, which can stand finally before the tribunal of the great Judge. In self-love, in the service of self and the world consists the peculiar essence of sin; the unconditional surrendry of heart and will to God, the perfect self-consecration and disinterested love to him, and humanity, constitute real virtue and godliness, the fulfilling of the law and the prophets, the sum of practical christianity. Yea we are to offer our bodies, according to Paul, as living, sacred and well pleasing sacrifices to God and all its members as instruments of righteousness. "Ye are," says the Apostle Peter to the faithful, "a chosen generation, a royal Priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people, that ye should show forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light." Praise and thanksgiving for all blessings and favors, supplications and intercessions for all classes and wants of humanity, Property and Life, Body and Soul,—these are the acceptable offerings which we are called upon to bring daily and hourly before God and his people. This is the reasonable service of the christian—this his purest joy, this his unspeakable gain. He that seeks his life for its own sake shall loose it, he that looses his life for the sake of God and his Church shall find it glorified, and immeasurably more valuable.

III. Finally, Christ is King of this spiritual Kingdom which comprehends heaven and earth, and endures to all eternity. "Yet have I set my King upon the Holy hill of Zion," says the Psalmist in reference to the Messiah. According to his human nature, he descended from royal blood, a branch from the root of Jesse. "Thou art the Son of God, thou art the king of Israel," as Nathanael accosted him at his first interview. This kingly honor shone forth in his deepest humiliation; yea Pilate the Gentile, became an unconscious witness of the truth, because he had placed upon the cross the superscription, in three lan-



guages, "this is the king of the Jews." But not of the Jews only! When he ascended on high, he said of himself, "To me is given all power on earth and in heaven," and now he is exalted to the right hand of God, the Father, "above all thrones, principalities, powers, might, authority, and every thing that can be named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come." He is placed "head over all things to the church, which is his body the fulness of him that filleth all in all." Yea, his name is according to Revelation "the King of Kings, and Lord of Lords."

Now as the prophetic and priestly functions, are essential elements of the divine image in us, so is also the kingly function. Even the erect appearance, the noble forehead, the flashing eye, much more the exalted spirit and imperious will of man declare his kingly descent and honor. He is the crown of creation, the Lord of nature, so to speak, the representative of God on earth. Therefore all power on earth was given to our first parents in Paradise, over the fish of the sea, the fowls of the air, the beasts of the field and all creeping things. "Thou makest him ruler over the works of thy hands," exclaims the Psalmist, in humble astonishment at this kingly honor, and in reference to the completion of the original creation by Christ, he said, "thou hast placed all things under his feet, sheep and oxen, also the wild beasts, the birds under heaven, and the fish in the sea, and all that pass therein."

How deeply has not man fallen from this exalted position! He, the royal Son, a poor slave of sin, the world and the devil, the sport of his lusts and unsanctified affections, which in spite of all outward power and glory, with which he is surrounded, often sinks himself beneath the level of the brute! O the ignominy, the shame upon the immortal spirit—upon the master-work of his creative power! True, here and there the rays of his glory break forth, and he manifests his superiority over nature in art and inventions, and he makes subservient to himself, the hidden treasures of the earth, and annihilates space and time. In the midst of his deepest fall, amidst his external slavery to sin, remain the painful remembrance of the Palace, which he abandoned—of the diadem which he wore—of the glory which surrounded him, and a desire, a longing for his Father's house, and the repossession of Paradise. But by means of these weak remains, he is not able to break the chains which he has forged, to separate himself from the service of his companions of shame, to which he has, in a terrible manner joined himself.

Through Christ alone we have Redemption from the power



of sin and satan. Whom the Son makes free he shall be free indeed, and he that does not possess this freedom, remains a slave though in golden chains. Christ, the king of heaven, which is not of, but in the world, has procured for us much more honor and dignity, by his glorious Resurrection and Ascension, than we lost through Adam, "and made us spiritual Kings and Priests," if by faith we are espoused to Him. For he that is in living union with the divine-human person has part in his kingly power and majesty. This character the christian is called upon to exercise by subduing his evil desires and lusts, whose slave he is by nature, through a victorious contest against flesh and blood, against the temptations of the world and the assaults of satan. The Apostle exhorts: "Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body, that ye should obey it in the lusts thereof." We are also challenged to the conquest against the princes and powers of the world dwelling in darkness, against the wicked spirits in the world. That servant, overcoming his affections, who has learned the great art of self-government in the school of Jesus Christ, is more free and stronger than the richest prince or conqueror, that is under this power. As Christ passed through suffering into his glory—through contests to the eternal victory over sin, death and the grave, so must also the christian reach the same mark, in the same manner. Here his royal honor is hidden from the eyes of the world, but "the christians internal light shines, although scorched externally, by the rays of the sun;" and when Christ who is our life shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory—"If we suffer with Him, we shall also reign with Him." "He that overcometh, to him will I give to sit with Me on My throne; even as I have overcome and am seated with my Father on his throne."

This is now an imperfect sketch of the three-fold honor conferred on him, that bears the name of the Saviour of the world not in vain. But this can manifest itself in the individual christian only so far as he is a living member of the body of Christ. The whole congregation of believers has a right to this appellation—to be the full and perfect bearer of this triple dignity. She, the church of God, is in a far higher sense, than any separate organ or representative, the Prophet—the great Teacher of Nations—"the pillar and ground of the Truth,"—she is the Priest, who points the impenitent to Christ—bringing daily and hourly sacrifices and thanks, prayers and intercessions to the honor of God and the salvation of the world: she, is the King, whom the Lord has elevated to be his bride and given the keys of the kingdom of heaven, and the dispensing of blessings and

curse in his name and by his authority. For this reason are we commanded to employ our Prophetical, Priestly and Kingly functions not beyond, much less in contact with the one, holy, universal Church of Jesus Christ, but in a living union and particular subordination to her, who is the mother of us all, by whom we are trained to these three offices and honors. In this view we can only become perfect with the whole body—here genuine godliness and sound churchliness fall together and go hand in hand.

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If we draw now in conclusion a few *practical reflections* respecting the meaning of the christian name, which must be done briefly, above all others we should in the first place *humble and cover ourselves with shame*, because we are all so far removed from this moral height and glory, to which, by the grace of God, we have been called, and which our name makes continually binding upon us, and which should be the aim of our highest and most earnest endeavors. Yea, how many are there, who are wholly unworthy of the christian name, who have buried their anointing to the prophetical, priestly and kingly offices, which they received in holy baptism, in their sins and unbelief! Such may well tremble and quake. For unless they speedily repent, their christian name which should be their pride and crown, will condemn them before the bar of God, and thus instead of a blessing, become a curse to them. If we are really in earnest with the salvation of our souls, and truly repent of our sins and infirmities, our christian name will serve as *comfort and encouragement* to still greater *exertion in holiness*. There is nothing more elevated and glorious than the destination of humanity, as represented in christianity, for this shows it to be the true and perfect religion. We poor sinners, we worms of the dust are called through Christ of pure mercy to the highest honor and dignity of which any creation can be capable. Our destination seems to surpass even that of the angels, for the Son of God did not take upon himself the nature of angels, but of man, and has forever united our nature to the divine. Here to every one the highest view is opened—a way—a crown which far surpasses the renown and honor of the Statesman—the Warrior—the Philosopher—the Artist, and yet open to the poorest, by an abiding, living faith in the Person of Jesus Christ, Our Lord. O let us then adore in the dust of humility—upon our knees give thanks to him for his unspeakable love, and with all our powers, early and late, by day and night, in joy and in sorrow, in thought, word and deed, reach after that which is requir-

ed from us, by our christian name, already demanded and impressed upon us as our destination in our baptismal vows, namely, really men of God, Prophets, Priests and Kings of the Triune God, blessed for evermore!

*Translated from Dr. Schaff's Kirchenfreund, by*  
J. W. S.

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### CHRISTIAN PRAYER.

*John xvi: 24. And in that day ye shall ask me nothing. Verily, verily, I say unto you, Whatsoever you shall ask the Father in my name, He will give it you.*

THE sense of a relation to their Creator and Governor can never be wholly removed from the minds of men. The character of this relation however has been differently understood.

There are those who acknowledge no need of a Mediator, who may stand between heaven and earth. God it is said, has established in the world, a moral constitution. Obedience to this brings happiness, while disobedience is followed with misery. Each individual is to make the best avail, possible under the circumstances, of his abilities and natural talents. Diligence and activity will secure large a reward of temporal good, and the process of life, as thus conducted, will be at the same time the preparation for the higher world of existence, into which the human spirit is to be carried after Death. The end of earth is the beginning of Heaven. "Man the arbiter of his own destiny" is the watchword of the true warrior in the hurried contests on the battle field of Time. The intelligent creature, in connection with the whole created world, is indeed in a general sense dependent upon the Creator. The Universe is upheld by Him in existence. In the human will, however, there is no room for such dependence. God is removed from any immediate concern in human events. The individual is free, independent, and is left to himself to determine by his actions, for weal or wo, the condition of his present and future being.

In this theory no regard is had of course to the mystery of sin. Wherever any sense is felt of the terrible lie in which our nature stands by reason of the original apostacy of the race, the

thought of such independence of the Author and Preserver of our being, is looked upon as blindness and folly. Yet here again, it is possible, even with a sense of human misery and want, to disallow the mediatorial economy of the Gospel. On the ground of the relation between God and his creatures, in the original creation, men still, although sinners, are permitted and encouraged to appear in the Divine Presence and can take to themselves the full assurance of favor and paternal regard from the merciful Father of all.

The Gospel while, on the one hand, it excludes the thought of Stoic self-dependence, on the other it equally rejects the unwarrantable trust of the Socinian and acknowledges no way of approach with peace, into the saving Presence of the Most High except in the Mediator of the New Covenant, and the Church from the beginning has been offering her worship to the Triune Jehovah, in the name of Him who is both the Son of God and the Son of Man. So that whatever we need in our souls or in our bodies, we are not to resolve to gain by labor and care, but in the spirit of little children, with a sense of utter helplessness and child-like inability, to trust our Heavenly Father to give us all temporal and spiritual mercies, as we have no power to make a single effort to gain them for ourselves. This trust in our Father in Heaven, which leads to christian prayer and christian living, is in the Gospel, always in the Divine, Human Mediator, whose birth and abiding presence in the world is the glad tidings of peace on earth and good will to men.

It would seem that a necessity exists in the constitution of the Godhead that the relation between God and his creatures should be through a Mediator. The mysterious essence of Jehovah, dwelling in the awful abyss of Eternity, in the process of distinction into three Persons, is revealed, made conscious to itself, not in the Father or in the Spirit, but in the Son, who is on this account called the Word. The word and thought in the human mind are held together in living union. The one is not possible without the other. And the word from our lips is the revelation to ourselves and to our fellow men of the character and meaning of our life. The real word of a man, must necessarily make known the full meaning of his interior being. In the mysterious processes imminent in the Divine Essence in Eternity the Divine Existence is revealed to itself in the generation of the Son, and only in Him, as the Word of God, could the eternal Father create the worlds and only in Him could His life-giving and sustaining presence be at hand for His Creatures. The full presence of God to man could also only be possible in

the event of the Word entering into the world, and thus carrying the Divine Essence into our nature. The Triune God is not revealed in Creation, nor even in the Shechinah of the Tabernacle. In the Person of the Word made Flesh, dwells the fullness of the Godhead bodily, for the first time for men. The fulness here is the actual presence of the Eternal Essence of Jehovah. Eternity brought into union with Time, the kingdom of Heaven set up on Earth. So that it would seem in the constitution of the Divine nature, there exists a necessity that we should appear before our Heavenly Father through a Mediator. It is a mere fancy then, a pure delusion in the mind of those who affect to offer worship to God, as if He were directly and at once the universal Father of men, and think to receive directly from Him divine blessing and grace.

It does not indeed require that we should first have a sound reason, in the way of argument, on the ground of which we may feel at liberty to exercise trust in this form in the Author and Preserver of our being. For this the testimony of the Divine Word, when once clearly made out is of itself sufficient, even in the absence of every kind of supplementary evidence. And it will always be of the highest account to keep steadily fixed in mind, that the practice of the church in praying through the Son, has grown out of the clear, explicit authority of the written Word. Yet if it can be seen, that this arrangement as made known in the Gospel, does not merely rest upon Divine appointment, but has an absolute necessity, both in the constitution of the divine and human nature, it must tend greatly to build up and confirm the wavering faith of our unbelieving hearts. For a supernatural revelation, while it transcends, must, to have the possibility of being accredited to the faith of men, conform to and be in perfect harmony throughout, with the established order of Nature and History. The system of nature and the institutions of society are however a process of mediation, in which our bodily and intellectual existence is begotten and developed to its perfect state. The life of the body, and no less the life of the soul is not a new creation brought about by Divine power exerted from Heaven in the case of each individual, but a generation accomplished through natural causes. Yet the connection between cause and effect always holds in the power of the Divine Will, not as if brought to bear from beyond the skies, but as at hand in the world, in virtue of the presence of the Word. The question, though wrongly propounded by the skeptic, may still be properly enough asked, Whether power does inhere in the creature, natural or human, and not

rather in the presence of the Creator, and in the creature as an instrument. It would seem at any rate, that human activity is not the cause of results that may follow but merely the occasion. In the labors of the husbandman for instance, it is clearly evident, that there is no necessary connection, at least so far as his own mind and will are concerned, between the preparing of the ground and the sowing of the seed in Autumn, and the harvest of the Summer. The process of growth that is to follow, after the seed has been deposited in the earth is regularly brought about, through agencies however, lying for the most part beyond his knowledge and acting entirely independent of his will. In the first place, can he bring to hand even the conditions, through the presence of which alone, it is possible that growth may commence. For this, are needed the constant supplies of light, heat and moisture, and these in proper quantity and at proper time. The constant presence, as also the constant absence of light, would be alike deleterious to all kinds of vegetable and animal existence, and would necessarily induce a large amount of suffering. But this alternate succession of light and darkness comes regularly to pass; day after day, we see the sun rising in the East and journeying to the West, thus performing over our heads during every twenty-four hours a stupendous miracle, as much to be wondered at, as when at the word of the servant of the Lord, it stood still upon Gibeon, in the midst of the heavens, and hasted not to go down for the space of a day. The round of the seasons too is a magnificent process accomplished in the period of the year. The melancholy decay of Autumn, the stern desolation of Winter, the reviving warmth of Spring, the maturing heat of Summer, come and go at their appointed time. The forces at work in nature producing these changes, are in this way making present the necessary conditions of growth. But with the conditions at hand, there is still in the growth itself of the simplest flower of the plain, a mystery that transcends our understanding. The wisest philosopher cannot tell to his fellow-men, how the germ of life latent in the seed unfolds from one stage to another, until it reaches the matured state. The labor of the husbandman is not the cause of the results that may follow thereupon, but only the condition. Can the will of man make the sun to rise and set, and the seasons to run their rounds? and can he make the germs of life in nature to unfold to full maturity, through the mysterious process of growth? The kindly fruits of the earth by which our bodies are clothed and fed, are brought not by our labor and toil, but are supplied from the bounteous storehouse of nature. The Divine Word

made all things that were made, and upholds all things in heaven and upon earth. So that the second Person of the ever-adorable Trinity is here already, the Mediator between God and Men, through whom comes all temporal good. Our daily food and raiment are brought to us by Him, and in that He has taught us to pray "Give us this day our daily bread," it is implied we have no power to obtain it of ourselves.

Then again have we any power to produce the growth of our own body? Who can add a single cubit to his stature? or change the color of a hair of his head? We are indeed to observe the conditions of health, but can do nothing besides. The flow of the red currents of life from the beating heart, the breathing of the lungs, and all the various processes taking place within our physical frame are carried on from moment to moment, independent of the action of the will, whether this be stirred up to manly energy, or may be lying powerless in the death of sleep.

If we be thus dependent and without power the proper order for us would be to withdraw trust from ourselves and to look to God for life and health, and to have faith in Him as he is present in nature through the Word. This is prayer—and labor would be in this case the certain evidence that Faith was real. For labor would then be carried forward, not with the spirit of a man of the world, but merely as the means through which natural blessings would be surely received in a Divine Providence.

The world of History again, like that of Nature, is the visible Presence of the Divine Word, but in a different form and for a different purpose. This Presence, here, as before, necessarily brings those who are brought to feel it divine blessings; not now, physical for the body, but intellectual and spiritual for the reason and faith of men. There is still greater necessity that these should be brought from abroad to the individual, than was found to be the case in the acquirement of merely natural good. He who cannot make a single blade of grass to grow, nor add a cubit to his stature, is much less prepared to form the character and carry forward the development of his interior being. The exercises for mental and religious training in the family and in the school do not of themselves in the way of cause produce mental and religious culture, but properly take only the place of an occasion. As rational and moral, the human subject is required to come into the possession of knowledge in his understanding and righteousness in his will. "These treasures of wisdom and knowledge," and we may add of righteousness, being "hid in Christ Jesus," they are not to be *acquired*, but to be



received as a gift from God; a gift however always conveyed through human institutions, and in these, upon the use of appointed means on the part of the receiving subject. The family is so ordered in its constitution as actually to make present and thus to reveal, the Life, and with it the Mind of the Divine Word, in the natural and spiritual birth and education of individual human and christian existence. "In the Word was Life, and that was the Light of Men," and all derived existence must come from Him. This does not fall directly by spiritual afflatus from the clouds, anew in the case of each individual, but is produced through generation from out the general order of human existence already at hand through the original Creation. Neither does spiritual life in regeneration fall from heaven, but is, as it is called, a generation out of the world of spiritual existence, at hand, through the second Creation. So that, as in the language not only of the Fathers, and medieval doctors, but also of the Reformers, the Church is truly the Mother of all the faithful. Individual existence is indeed distinct, individual and personal, yet is always comprehended in a life broader than itself, out of which it has been produced, and only by remaining continually rooted in which it can continue to exist and be brought to a perfect state. But for this very reason the meaning, end of such separate, single existence, does not lie in what may happen to be the mind and will of the individual himself, but rather in the deeper purpose, present in the Divine mind, as this underlies and at the same time is unfolded for the knowledge of men, in the growth of families and nations. These institutions constitute in fact, the living process, in which the revelation of the Divine character and will is being accomplished. So that the family and the nation, as they are standing at any given time, may be said to carry in their own bosom, in a certain sense, the very mind of God, and do so, from the fact, that they embody previously the Presence of God. And it is not possible to come into the possession of the Divine mind, nor to be found living in the Divine Presence, except as we are carried up livingly in these institutions, by the continued process of healthy intellectual and spiritual growth, through the successive stages of human existence. In the Family and in the Nation we receive life, are born; and in them, are enshrined for us the treasures of knowledge and righteousness. These, *hid* in Christ, come thus to be revealed, so that being reproduced in our own growth, we are brought to dwell in Truth and in Life. Moreover these institutions are not only the store-houses, in which are contained earthly and heavenly treasures, but are constructed throughout to fit



into our intellectual and spiritual being. The structure of the natural world is in perfect harmony with the framework of our bodily life. So much is this found to be the case, that a change in the proportion of the elements composing the atmosphere would necessarily make our existence miserable. Should the axis of the earth, instead of being inclined, be brought to lie in the plane of its orbit, it would bring at once to an end the magnificent cycle of the seasons, and give rise to another order of nature that might produce jarring and discord at every point. That man is required by painful effort, with the sweat of his brow, to bring his life into almost even the least degree of harmony with the constituted order of the physical universe, results from the presence of sin, through which he has lost the Paradisaic state of his being, wherein the wild beasts of the field, lay harmless at his feet, and the earth yielded spontaneously its kindly fruits. In like manner, the structure of the moral and spiritual world is in complete harmony with our intellectual and spiritual nature, and for this reason human relationships, when holding in their normal form, are not arbitrary arrangements of human contrivance for mutual benefit and convenience, but rather, are in their own constitution the divinely appointed order of personal existence, through which, this is to be borne upward into the blessedness of immortality. "Human relationships are not artificial types of something divine, but are actually the means, *and the only means*, through which man ascends to any knowledge of the divine; and every breach of a human relation, as it implies a violation of the higher law, so also is a hinderance and barrier to the perception of that higher law,—the drawing a veil between the spirit of a man and his God." The name father is a title given on the ground of an actual relation. As God is the Father of all men, they, who are allowed to bear this divine name on earth, must for the time be actually invested with the divine character and embody in themselves under a human form the presence of God, and there is no room for the child to come into this divine presence, except, as it enters, through filial trust on the one hand and parental affection on the other, into unreserved communion and sympathy with the mind and will of the parents. Thus being taught to acknowledge, through filial trust and obedience, earthly parental government, the subject comes gradually to the recognition of a personal connection in the paternal government of God over men. Other human relations are not any less real. The Prophet, Priest and King have not first manufactured their offices by craft, and afterwards filled them for profit. In the Jewish theocracy these were

ordained with sacred anointing, and were only considered faithful, in as far as they felt all their power to come, not from themselves, but from the mysterious presence of Jehovah in the symbol of the Shechinah, from whose servants, standing before that tabernacle in which the Lord dwelt, they had received anointing.

To understand the influence of the relationships in the family, we have need to consider only the actual facts, that are presented in society. Nothing is more common than to observe striking resemblances between those thus bound together. These are to be seen in the features of the countenance, in the tones of the voice, the general air and carriage, and even extend over into the intellectual and spiritual being, in a peculiar cast of mind, and tone of moral and religious thought and affection. How these come to exist is indeed a mystery, yet it is evidently brought about not from beyond, but within the family; of course by a divine hand, acting however, it would seem, in the thinking and willing of the Parent. So it is well known, that certain diseases both of body and of mind are often hereditary, moral traits of character too, vices and virtues are seen frequently to continue in families for generations. This appears to be the fulfillment of those awful words on the table of Commandments, the iniquities of the father, both original and actual, shall descend upon the children, unto the third and fourth generation. From the parental constitution, in itself considered, it is absolutely impossible that it should be otherwise, although it never can be so actually. For the redeeming grace present in the surrounding community reaches over more or less fully into all the families within its bosom, and extends a parental solicitude around those who have become orphans, by either the bodily or spiritual death of their parents. From such considerations, it is evident, that the family must be a divine institution and contain the Divine Presence, so that it is in fact a process of Mediation, by which temporal and spiritual blessings are to be received. There are other relationships, springing from the constitution of the state, through which the human spirit is carried upward into a full harmony with the Divine Will, and into full communion with the Divine Mind. The distribution of the human world into the forms of national existence is not an accident, nor a mere arrangement of human wisdom, but has an inward necessity in the life of the world itself. It is impossible to understand the origin and purpose of national institutions, or to find any meaning in History generally, except as we are prepared beforehand to see in it the evolution of a Divine Mystery, and thus to

acknowledge at the same time a Divine factor working in and through a free human agency in the accomplishment of earthly events. The division of the human family into the different races, cannot be accounted for, with any degree of satisfaction, from a change in outward circumstances, and is utterly unintelligible on the theory that the will of man is the ruling power in the production of events. It must be certainly from the working of a Divine hand, that those born in a certain region of the globe and from among a certain portion of the human family, upon being compared with those in other geographical limits, and from another race, should be found to be by birth of a different colour, with different outward features; a different structure throughout of the physical frame, as seen especially in the formation of the skull, thus indicating a different structure still deeper in the interior and spiritual being. And within these historically formed castes, into which individual men are born and in which they must dwell in time at least,—within these again, there are mysterious distinctions; whole classes of individuals are arranged into separate communities, each clearly distinguished from the other. The citizens of a particular nation are born into a peculiar order of intellectual and spiritual existence. They are comprehended in a community of feeling, of interest, and of purpose, are ruled by a common spirit, and working out, unconsciously or not as it may happen, a common end. Collectively in their national capacity, they are appointed to solve a given problem, it may be in practical life, in art, or in science. There will be unity of character, in those dwelling on one soil, and this because there is unity of life, out of which they have been begotten. There is a peculiar style of dress, and a general air that is national. The works of art are distinct, and the poems of a people especially have the expression of a national spirit. Science, even natural, but particularly ethical and political is widely distinct at any one time, and above all when nations of different ages are compared together. The distinction here, then, as in the family, lies in the intelligence and moral feeling of the individual, in his inward, and spiritual being. This is reflected clearly in the national language, which embodies the national reason, and contains, in one view at least, its intellectual and spiritual wealth.

As the etymology of the word imports, the nations holding the mind and life of the world at any given time have been brought into existence in the way of birth from the womb of the past. They spring forth always out of the ruins of that order of thought and will, in which the human spirit had been

for centuries previously comprehended. The dissolution of the wornout forms, in which the soul has for ages been dwelling is at the same time the birth of new institutions, that become a new habitation for the spirit. In these are to be seen the struggles of the human soul to realize its own meaning and proper life. The vast processes that form the way to the accomplishment of this result, as they succeed each other like the waves of the sea, have beneath the surface an inward connection. But outward traces and marks also of a deep bond of union in the succession of national institutions from one age to another are furnished in the researches of philology. It seems now to be settled that the Sanskrit of Hindostan is the parent of the entire Indo-Germanic family. The Persian, Latin, Greek and Teutonic, although widely separated in geographical and political relations, have a common origin, and are bound together in affinity by birth. A peculiar inward and outward structure of intellectual and moral existence reaches out with colossal proportions, from ancient India, across Asia and Europe to the shores of the great Pacific. Here is an order of civilization, peculiar to itself,—an order of civilization carrying forward in its course the most magnificent creation of the soul in politics, in art and science, that starting on the banks of the Ganges has been moving Westward, forming the central stream of the world's life: including the world historical nationalities of Gentilism, first India and then Persia the depositories of the rich treasures of oriental learning and wisdom, then in Greece and Rome, the depositories again of the Literature of the orient, under a renovated form: after this, through the universal spread of the Greek language at the time of the introduction of the Gospel-Era, receiving into its bosom, the whole wealth of the literature of the Semitic Family, especially the treasures enshrined in the Hebrew Commonwealth, all of which were transfused from the Semitic, over into the Romanic and Germanic nationalities, that have risen upon the soil of Europe, and in which is rolling forward majestically the river of Incarnate Truth and Life, with Paradise on its banks. And there can be no intelligence on the part of the individual, and no moral culture, except as he grows into that world of intelligence and life lying around him in the institutions of society. To be comprehended in the relations of the Family as produced in History, is actually to stand, in virtue already of birth, in the world of Truth, and Knowledge. And through the relationship of the nation, the individual is still more borne upwards into the realms of reason and celestial glory. To stand outside of society is to be intellectually and morally in the

position of the savage, and leads to death in arbitrary self-will.

Human Reason both in its constitution and history forms a process of mediation in which is brought to pass the birth and growth of the human soul to the freedom of Immortality. The inexhaustible fountain of this glorious world of Truth and Life is the Divine Reason and Will in the Person of the Eternal Word. There is a tendency in all spheres of life, natural and human, to seek a centre on which to be supported. Such centres are found by the Geologist already in the creations of both vegetable and animal existence. The family carries in itself evidently the same character, and in every community there are particular individuals, on whom for the most part its life and activity seem to be poised, and the nation will always produce personal bearers of its life, appointed to utter the national thought and will; and, as since the Christian Era, a supernatural economy, broad as the earth, has been taking deep root in the natural and spiritual world, every Christian age produces those, who are constituted by birth and education, representatives between heaven and earth; the central personality from whom the whole world of intelligence and will springs is Jesus the Son of God. In Him too all the lines of History meet.

The Human Family undeveloped starts in unity and in the course of evolution is subjected for four thousand years to a process of division. These distinct races, comprised mainly at the end of this period, of the Indo-Germanic and Semitic are united in Christ in whom there is neither Jew nor Greek. History since the Gospel, is not as before a process of division but of union. The divisions now are not into races (parts of the one race) on the plane of humanity, but into Churches (parts of the one Church) in the plane of Christianity. This process of development both ante-Christian, and Christian is to end in the developed unity of the Human Family in the new heavens and new earth. And Christian worship is offered in the name of the Son, as in Him the world of nature is created and upheld and around Him the world of Human Reason in its constitution and history revolves as its eternal centre.

## KITTO'S CYCLOPÆDIA.

*The Popular Cyclopædia of Biblical Literature.* By JOHN KITTO, D. D., F. S. A., Author of the 'Pictorial Bible' &c.; assisted by the Rev. JAMES TAYLOR, D. D., of Glasgow. *Illustrated by numerous engravings.* Boston: Published by Gould & Lincoln, 1851. Pp. 800, 8vo.

THOUGH itself a pretty large work, this volume is condensed for popular use from a larger publication, the "Cyclopædia of Biblical Literature," which was designed to furnish a Dictionary of the Bible, we are told, for the libraries of ministers and theological students—"not framed, as others had been, out of old materials, but embodying the products of the best and most recent researches in Biblical Literature," as they have been carried forward in different parts of the Christian world. With this larger work we are not directly acquainted; it is represented however as being altogether of a much higher order than any other publication of the same general class which has yet appeared, being the result of an immense labor and research, and keeping full pace throughout with the advanced biblical and theological knowledge of the present day. Dr. Kitto is merely the Editor of the work; its contents are made up mainly by contributions from distinguished scholars, whose names are for the most part a sufficient guaranty that the subjects on which they write are handled in a truly learned way. Among the contributors we notice several leading theologians of Germany, and two or three of some note from the United States. In the nature of the case, the articles thus furnished cannot all be of the same merit, and different shades of theology may come here and there slightly into view; although the purely literary character of most of the topics is a protection against this to a great extent. The present abridgement is intended to include all the matter of the larger work that is suited to popular and general use, and to meet in this way the wants of the great body of the religious public. "In the work as it here stands, is offered such an exhibition of the results of large research, without the details and authorities, as could not, it is believed, have been produced, had not the larger Cyclopædia previously existed, and its valuable materials been made available for this service. Drawn from such a source, it is believed that this Abridgement will possess the same superiority over *Popular Cyclopædias* of this class, as the original work confessedly does over those which aspire to higher erudition." It needs only a very general inspection of the book, to see that it forms a highly valuable help for popular use, in what may be termed the outward study of the Bible.

THE END OF VOLUME III.

